



ENCAUSTICS

BY

STARK YOUNG

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ENCAUSTICS

by

STARK YOUNG



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MAD MONEY

FOR the half hour before my train I loitered over a pavement bookstall and bought finally *The Life of Reason*, a worn First Volume, with the Introduction. There was a copy on my shelves at home, but this one could do no harm. And a few minutes later I sat reading it, admiring all anew Santayana's lucid world. The conversation of the two people on the seat ahead of me began to fill my ears.

"Party's right!" one of them was saying.

I looked at them, two women, one of them something under forty, the other around nineteen. The young lady wore sport clothes, a kind of rough lavender, with a round hat and a cock's feather, and had long earrings of cornelian, not bad in their way. She had clear and delicate features, and had plucked her

eyebrows out to a line, a thread, that went very well with the bones of her head. Her companion had a straight-brimmed hat of red straw, from which the vermilion light reflected down upon her face, with ravishing intentions that were encored by a blaze of rouge. She too had plucked her eyebrows, but the line that remained did not in the least correspond to the skull beneath, and the effect was a sort of puffy stare. Her hands were plump and her thumb-nails too short; but she, and the young lady also, had polished and wrought at all their nails till they were like some shocking variety of horn, like claws, and, even more repulsive, like the fresh viscera one sees in the windows of poultry shops.

The two were covering some social event when I first overheard them. The young lady was speaking:

“And so I went. And I had to drag a blind and all that. And you know when you get like that you don’t know what’s on, whether he’ll swack or not, and whether he’ll bring you a son-chariot or a hay-burner—”

MAD MONEY

They talked on and I began to fall behind, as one does at a play in a foreign tongue. I heard phrases that I knew and phrases that I did not know. I seemed to be seeing through slits, now darkness, now lights. And when the words got more comprehensible the content left me still farther off.

"So I said, 'Let's hurry!' and he said 'All right!' and Mother said 'Look here, you'll be late sure!' and I said 'No, we won't,' and we were not either. And you never saw such a push in your life as was there, believe me, push is the word. You know I see where a girl shot a fellow the other night up at a barracks somewhere. It's awful. The war was terrible, wasn't it!"

"Did you see," the older woman replied, "where there were ten women suing for divorce in one day? Isn't it awful! I saw Mae Murray in Fascination, isn't it wonderful! Who do you think's the greatest movie actress? I said to Tom 'I think Mae Murray is,' but Tom said 'You may not agree with me but you know I think Katherine MacDonald is,' he

said—" And so on. And meanwhile I was feeling very small.

When the two had got off the train I turned to the man on the seat beside me, a pleasant-enough-faced personage of thirty-five or so, with a small mustache and waving hair. He had looked up from his evening paper to watch the two women going down the aisle, and when they were gone had looked around smiling. "Skirts? Eh?" he said. I took the chance to ask him about the talk I had heard, some of the expressions at least. What was it, I asked, when you dragged a blind?

To drag a blind, he said, was to go to a party with some one you had never seen. And to swack was to get drunk. A son-chariot was the car you got for your son and heir; and then of course you'd know a hay-burner was a horse.

I tried other phrases that had stuck in my head without their sentences. What was it to throw a mean bust?

"To have a fine figure," he exclaimed. "Like saying she's a mean kisser. Special or extra or something like that." "Oh," I said.

And what was a temp-stick that the young lady said she would bite off she was so mad? Temp-stick, he said, was thermometer. And pacifiers were violets.

Then, for one last question, I wanted to know, what was mad money, the young lady had said that of course she had her mad money along when she left home.

Mad money, he explained, quite seriously, is what they take with them to get home on in case they fall out with the fellow they've gone with.

"So that's that," my companion remarked, and went back to his paper.

Mad money, I thought, the phrase was not bad.

And I sat thinking of that company of three, the two women and the man. It was not the slang, there is always slang one way or another, and often lively and likeable enough, obviously. But it was the talk—that strange and elusive emptiness of it, always direct discourse, "I said, he said, she said"; always mere statement, never an abstraction or generaliza-

tion or conclusion, never a word that cut down even a little into its matter or showed upon itself a tinge of experience or the shock of living. And it was the faces. How strangely empty the two women's faces were! You see them repeated in swarms on a New York street and in the trains everywhere. Faces empty though amiably hard; the faces of people who want nothing very much. Faces that are active, competent for the ends desired, jerked into lines with idle energy and idle possessiveness; but without any depth after all, untouched by things for which men have died, and with the expression somehow of oddly grown-up children, of experience rattled in on top of a twelve-year-old mind. In them humanity is visibly reduced to its platitude. They are like dinner plates; they have about as much subtlety to them as a painted oyster. And how far, I reflected, was all this spreading over the country? Or over the world? And most of all what was to come of it?

It would be foolish, I knew, to despair over it, to become shrill about it. As foolish as

growing cynical over the weather would be, which only takes away one's balance and resource. But I sat there feeling very lonely and lost. There was something of fright in the feeling, too, such as you may feel when you look into some of the popular magazines. What is it all about? It does not seem to be brutal or to be witty or clever or well done or barbarous or intelligent. And the millions of people that consume it all—you have the sense of being foreign, lost. If it were only barbaric, you might feel better; there is hope in barbarism and beauty in it, as every one admits. But this active and competent and shallow adequacy!

My companion was reading his paper still, and I opened my book.

I read two paragraphs and sat there thinking of Santayana's writing. I thought of its hard glory, its clear outline, its texture of rich and fine mentality. How well he knows, too, that beautiful and magnificent theory carries with it the obligation to say it completely, to give it the style, the imagery, the movement, the form—in a word—that the soul of it essentially is.

Santayana knows where philosophy ends and poetry or religion or mysticism begins; he knows their relationship to life as he knows the relationship of philosophy to life. His thought may not be something to found a new gospel on perhaps—I am glad that it is not, there is so much gospel fruit in the land. But when more succulent and evangelical creeds fail one, Santayana may be good to rest upon. With him the mind gets its due noblesse oblige. With him feeling is distinguished and existence aristocratic.

And then I began to try to express for myself just what is that strange effect one gets from Santayana at his best. It is an effect of tragic peace, a kind of rich definiteness of all desire and knowledge and beauty, a kind of brilliance that is made up of our limitations, a deep sense of some fatal splendor of light that is more beautiful but less happy than dreams.

From these meditations my neighbor distracted me by turning over his paper and getting the last page of it smoothed out to suit himself. He appeared to have mastered the en-

MAD MONEY

tire contents so far. My thoughts left Santayana and began to wander over that last newspaper page. A column about China, battles and massacres; a woman had jumped out of a window; a rum ship had been seized by federal agents—I knew the brand of it, narrative, events, with no comment, no point, no application, no hint of the surrounding complexities of life. Incidents and adolescence. Pure action. Juvenility of fact.

My eye fell then on a heading half toward the bottom; there naturally enough, I reasoned, the news conveyed being less murderous than the Chinese affair:

SHIMMY DANCER ASKS DAMAGES

FOR PERMANENT LOSS OF WIGGLE

Almost any one, you might think, would smile or be amazed at that except the young man—and perhaps the millions like him. But all he did was to give a little jerk of his elbow when he saw this piece of news and bring the lines closer to his eyes. Then he began to read

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with profound absorption. It was evidently nothing strange for him, it had punch, it went, it belonged, it was life.

I looked back at the Santayana and put it carefully in my pocket. Some day, perhaps, I thought, when I could no longer stand the company I was with, he would be my mad money and take me home again.

THE OLD NEW WOMAN

OUR friend Mrs. C— has lately been in Tucson and Taos making a study of Hopi society, Indian myths, customs, conceptions of property and the family; and on her way East has stopped by with us here in Texas. She comes from Boston, of a good, unattractive, sterling family. Her face is ruddy and matter-of-fact like a man's; her voice, though she means it to be quiet and cultivated and something of a rebuke to the vulgar, is really a coo of false vowels above a raw undertone. She is rich enough, but gives away most of her income to causes. One of the most eminent reformers in the city is her friend and ideal, and whatever he reforms she reforms.

Once in, no theory is too strong for Mrs. C—; and if she practiced what she sometimes preaches, my aunts would go out of one door when she came in at the other. As it is, whenever our beloved friend makes herself clear on some points, my gentle ladies keep their eyes on

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their laps and move their fans slowly to and fro, and the two ante-bellum uncles are lost in an effort to discover which would be the more gallant on their parts, an air of high seriousness or naughty understanding. But Texas is not the field for all causes. The women here have not the right aggressive combativeness; the climate works against them in that, and the ease with which they get what they want leaves them cold to nobler efforts toward things they do not want at all. During this lull the ethnological gems on silver chains that our friend has exhumed and brought along with her have been some consolation; she is always finding something else to prefer them to, Cartier, Tiffany, Lalique and then the whole Renaissance. And she has vented her mood not seldom over the false and un-American names of houses and estates that she has seen here, Beauvoir, Buena Vista, Inshallah, and the rest, where she feels that something really American like Swotola or Kakaki and so on, would be intelligent and right—though we never seem able to remember what she says the Hopis mean by them. In our

THE OLD NEW WOMAN

house there is nothing at all for her; we are hopeless; only an old loyalty and affection makes her put up with us at all. It has been hard on Mrs. C— staying with us. But we think it good for her to rest a bit from her turbulent vineyard.

And so a whole week has passed with no outburst of her concern, of that anxiety of hers lest the world should not do the best possible for itself. There was indeed one moment when something of this seemed imminent, but that blew over. We were standing on the terrace where the fountain sent up its thin stream and made its undertone of music all day in our ears. The doves were singing everywhere, from far-off fields, a beautiful long note. Mrs. C— asked if the fountain ran all night. I replied that the gardener shut it off when he went to bed.

“And when *do* these doves begin singing?” she asked then. “I seemed to hear them at daybreak this morning.”

They began with the first light, I said.

“But they are singing now,” Mrs. C— re-

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monstrated, "and see how dark it is! It's past eight. It's eight-twenty."

She looked at me. And I knew what it was. She felt that these creatures were not getting the proper amount of sleep. But she strangled the impulse to say more.

Yesterday, however, for a short half-hour, Mrs. C— revived her dream. Lourine, the cook, came in to ask about a market bill. No sooner has she disappeared than Mrs. C—, who had seen Lourine for the first time, began. We knew already her powers of questioning. We knew how she could search your soul to enable you to state your views of things; how she could lead you to confession of error, to wholesome riddances of inner conviction and to admissions of belief and agreement. The manner in which she leads you to yield up your little data, the kind of spit-it-out-in-mother's-hand persuasiveness of her approach, is irresistible.

She wanted to know now about the education given to these colored women, about the houses they lived in, their advantages culturally and ethically and economically. We said what

THE OLD NEW WOMAN

seemed best, knowing very well that anything our friend did not choose to believe she would, in her Boston capacity of judge of the race-problem, dismiss as mere prejudice on our part.

We had always thought it wiser, in fact, to know as little as possible about Lourine's private life. She is a big, good-natured woman, with a fine, wild figure, a haunting voice when she sings, as she often does, a chuckling laugh and a bad temper. We pay her the wages settled on, twelve dollars a week; we feed, by a system recognized as toting, a number of her friends; and we make her frequent presents. After that we do not interfere. That much we tried to indicate to our guest, who listened kindly but judicially. We knew the signs.

Half an hour later I heard Mrs. C— on the back-porch speaking to Lourine, who rested there on a stool shelling peas. From my study chair I could catch every word of the occasion; and sat listening and wondering, as the scene went on, if there was another person in the world besides our friend who could have gone through with it.

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The talk began with something general about Texas and then education, tactful intentions, as I could hear by Mrs. C—'s voice. She deepened gradually to something like an address, and darkened to sublimity, as Byron would say, with words oblivious of Lourine in their altitude. And Lourine in a kind of choral manner that she often has, expressed her agreement: "Yas, Mam, tha's right." "Sho is right!" "I say! Ain' dat de truth!" whatever the argument. Finally Mrs. C— came to her point, what has been her cause all spring, I believe, the New Woman. Had Lourine become familiar with the questions regarding women? "Do you know the modern woman?" she asked.

Lourine answered amiably:

"Yas, Mam, I think I does. I've heard of 'em but I don' recollect' exactly what dey is."

Mrs. C— was used to audiences of working-men's wives in the East. She explained patiently. She told Lourine what the question was, of the equal rights with men that were due women and were even yet but partly granted. She spoke of woman's right to have her own

career. To lead a free life as regarding love and marriage, to decide such matters for herself. The same with regard to property. They had a right to do whatever men did, to smoke, whatever in fact men did. She declared that the world must come to realize that there could be no divergence of opinion between the position and the rights of women and men. To all this Lourine seemed warmly in accord: "Tha's right," she said, "sho is right, I say!" And Mrs. C— ended with one of her best platform periods.

"Consider," she said, "that for three thousand years the position of women in Europe has been practically that of slaves!"

"I say!" Lourine agreed again. Then she added, socially, "Good Lord, how time do pass, don't it!"

The sheer and almost ethereal abstraction of this complaisance on Lourine's part must have penetrated even Mrs. C—, for—though she did not stop—she began now to take up her points one by one.

"How would this idea impress you and your

friends then?" she asked. "The equal opportunity between women and men for a career. For choosing their own means of livelihood?"

"Mam?" asked Lourine this time, faced with a straight question.

"What would you think about a woman's right to make her own life? To support herself instead of depending on a man?"

"Yas 'm. Tha's what I does. I always spotes mysef and I always has. Sometimes Chester don' do nothin' and comes a axin' me for my money. But I say let him git a job o' his own. He jes baigs and baigs sometimes, and 'en I jes say naw, sir, you put yo money where yo mouth is and you'll git it."

"Indeed, Lourine? Well, well. And to do whatever men do, things, say, like smoking?"

"I've always smoked. I smoke a pipe. I say sho got to have my pipe in the evenin'."

"And going where you like? Enjoying the same liberty that men enjoy as to your going and coming? What of that?"

"Yas, mam, I goes when I likes. Ain' no man go' be tryin' to dominate me."

THE OLD NEW WOMAN

"And every woman has a right to keep her own name, as the man does. To keep her own name."

"Yas, mam, tha's right, sho is! My name's Lourine Thompson, that's what I call myself and tha's the name my mother give me."

"And every woman has a right to a separation—" The postman's whistle was coming nearer the gate, but I delayed in order to hear the end of all this. Mrs. C—'s voice seemed less sure of itself. By now, I thought, she must see that her cause was vain. She must be merely going through it, with points from old lectures and debates. "To alter a contract, to leave the man when she feels that it is best for her to leave."

Lourine no doubt was feeling herself a great success with this odd white lady:

"Yas, mam, tha's right. I'm my leave Chester when I gits good and ready. I tells him 'at. I say, Honey, when I'm done I'm my hit de grit from dis place."

"Ah, but what does the man say, what does your husband say to all this?"

"Ma'am? Chester?"

"Is Chester your husband's name? Yes."

Lourine chuckled: "No, mam, Chester ain' my husband. Chester wouldn't be stayin' with me dis long if he was my husband."

"You're not married then?"

"No, mam, I'm not married. But we been correspondin' for some time."

One way or another, that, I knew, must end it, and I went off for the letters. In the drawing-room I found Mrs. C— again and delivered her stack to her, more than our family gets in three months. I sat watching her rip open envelope after envelope, with the air of being sure of something in them that needed attention. Once she paused:

"Do you know," she said, without looking up or referring to her adventure, "it's difficult to know what is best for various kinds of people."

I said, "Rather," and she began on the letters again.

From the kitchen came reverberations that shook the house, where Lourine was beating her

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biscuit dough. And meanwhile her voice arose, as wild as the stars, barbaric, plaintive, desolate, singing:

Humble yosef, de bell's done rung,
Ding dong, O Lord!

THE SAD PHOTOGRAPH

JOHN GORDON is read by thousands. He has written long and short poems about the slums, the farm people, the working man and the sea. His work is vivid, rough and strong—perhaps a little rougher than strength really is—and full of that combination of the tender and manly that is one of the best traits of our English poetry. Gordon is regarded by some people as a revolutionary, by others as a realist, by others as degenerate, by others still as pessimistic; but all unite in regarding him as tragic. The number steadily increases of those who are familiar with his work and with his photograph.

This photograph, sometimes the frontispiece of a volume of Gordon's and sometimes furnished to reviewers everywhere by his publishers, shows a man of around forty. It is a three-quarters view of a gentle, clear-cut face with the skin drawn rather tightly over the well-

THE SAD PHOTOGRAPH

shaped skull—a meager look that suggests early dissipation—a thin, sensitive mouth and a good square chin. The eyes look slightly downward and out into space. They are set; their outline is plaintive. Their droop leads us to notice the hopeless look about the lips and the slight bend of the ascetic head. It is the picture of a very sad face; the aspect of it is absent, melancholy, habitually tragic.

It is this photograph that represents the side of Gordon that disturbs me. As a devoted friend of his I could wish that Gordon would let his work speak for him, and in his photograph would give to the public not this more or less acted version of himself but only whatever outer semblance the camera might secure. To be so reserved and withdrawn as he is with most people and then to broadcast this photographic outpouring of himself seems to me a doubtful business. But after all, if you like, this may be a good thing to do. It may be a legitimate arrangement to make in one's life. This selection and promotion of a single pattern, an essential expression as it were, for

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Gordon's face, may serve to convey to his public, as Nature unaided might never do, his melancholy vision of life. It has no doubt helped already to create a certain point of view from which his readers have learned to approach his poetry. I will grant that, though I must add that I regret to see a man whom I admire and whom I know to have a deep and beautiful and sincere response to life, allow himself even a chance of striking a pose. Great natures do not need that expedient.

But I am willing to pass all this over and to forget for the moment the sad photograph. What distresses me is that Gordon seems really to have settled into this rôle of sadness, into this profession of melancholy. And I regret this not only on Gordon's account but for so many realists who have done exactly the same thing. If I confronted Gordon with such a platitude as that one thing is not more real than another, that the camellia is as real as the ash-barrel, the smile as the tear, the ruby as the wound, he would of course grant that; and he might be for a time less ready with his talk about the real

THE SAD PHOTOGRAPH

and realism. But half a minute later if I went on to speak of yet other realities than those he glowers on, to speak of dancing and laughter and fruit and flowers, Gordon would say, "Oh, those—" with a falling intonation in his voice, and in his eyes a mild, blank contemplation of my forehead. This would be equivalent to his saying that no doubt such things are very pretty. From which we may conclude ultimately that while our elation over a flower is only pleasant, our depression over an ash-barrel is terrible; our thoughts on Shelley's imagination are agreeable, on the world's neglect of him, agonizing. And the truth is that Gordon would talk about Shelley's tragedy with such tragic feeling and tragic charm that for the moment I too would think that men's neglect of Shelley meant more than Shelley's power through his imagination over men forever. I shall not say any of these things to Gordon.

But some day I shall try to make one point at least for him. I shall say that the world around us is—obviously—full of things that can leave in our minds some abstraction that

will feed our living. The moon, for one example, the moon at night shining in the heavens—there can be in it a pause, a silver vista of possibility, a suspension, a silence, that may leave in the mind a kind of quietness and space, may leave a peace that is not theological, not optimistic, not necessarily comforting even, and that is not a conclusion of any kind; but is merely a proportionment, a release, a harmony, such as we might get from a pattern of lines and colors which mean nothing at all but that one quality which they express. In music there is pure flux and commerce, apply it to your beliefs or not, as you please. In the lines of a statue there is a quiet waiting, a rhythm of parts, the rebuke of time to the impatient moment. The lines of a temple carry on them the acceptance of and the creation out of physical law or necessity. A Greek vase may have pure roundness, points swimming at equal distances from a center. An old Venetian velvet may be rich, grave, elaborate, austerely suave. And the stars at night have, at the very least, distances, fire, strangeness, innumerability.

THE SAD PHOTOGRAPH

From all these instances the qualities—such as richness, austerity, proportion—that are perceived may be carried into one's own attributes and become character; into one's actions and become conduct; and into one's thinking and become ideas or concepts. And the slant for such experience may be tragic or not, as the case may be.

To this Gordon would say, "Slush!"—meaning that it was only emotion. But he could not down me with that. In the first place his tragic state is emotion quite as much as this. In the second place there is no more reason to doubt the value of emotional experience than of the so-called intellectual. In the third place this is not the point, as Gordon would know; and he would go on to say that I was another Pollyanna or some damned Cousin Marion Bright or Aunt Minerva. But I should not be talking at all about God's being in his heaven or even the snail on the thorn or the best of all possible worlds. I should only be saying what has been admitted for ages, that the completeness of our living is measured by the completeness of our

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response to all experience, with all the complexity, the proportion and the just values implied; and that therefore the perception of these qualities in things, in the moon, the temple, the flower, the action, is a form of exercise for us, and that all our parts—exactly as do the legs—become easier and healthier and more trustworthy by exercise.

Say, then, I do tell Gordon all this. I am not even saying that this is necessarily a beautiful world, but only that our exercise comes through responding to it. I am not asking Gordon to cheer up. I am only asking him—and realists like him—not to be so monotonous in his reactions, and not to decide on such hard limits to his experience, not to pore on the garbage and merely glance at the rose, not to admit the fact of the workingman's burden of injustice and deny the happy mathematics of his trained muscles; I am asking Gordon to think of the high destiny and triumph of a Greek column as well as of the degeneracy of a New England farm. I do not say in the least that such a change will make him any happier. I say that it will tend

THE SAD PHOTOGRAPH

to make more reliable and significant his point of view, exactly in the same sense that—other things being equal of course—we rely more on the description of the man who has been all around the house than on that of one who has looked at the west wall only.

I hate, moreover, to see such a man as Gordon indulge in sadness or take it on as a career; for that might too easily become dangerous through being false, and stupid through being so set. Sadness in a trivial person becomes trivial; and even in an important person, if too kept up and too nursed and too isolated, sadness may become merely operatic, lyrical and more depressed than tragic. And after all, if one wishes to be really sad, the fact remains that all that is bearable in this rotten world decays, that the story of all beauty, with whatever emphasis of passionate love repeated, ends in death and ruin; and that—sadder yet, if you like—one man cannot compete with universal woe.

But Gordon must, of course, work out his own way. If this dilation of his perceptions,

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this enlarged exercise of himself, this wider complexity in his response to the world about and within him, would throw him off and dilute the power that he has now with such concentrated if narrow intensity, it would indeed be a mishap for him to change. Better a small poet than an ample nobody in a lost track. And it goes without saying, of course, that if this would spoil Gordon's business for him, work havoc with his ego, his publishers and his readers, I am not asking him to heed me at all. But with the photograph already made now and broadcasted and ready to hand for emergencies, I should think Gordon might safely give more things a chance to encounter his reactions. He might forget his sadness of the moment for that more spacious and universal and eternal—though not necessarily less sad—response to the world around him and might leave this melancholy stir of his for that tragic poise too deep for tears and photographs.

TEA WITH MADAME CHEKHOV

THE desire of making a fair show in the world might well deter any one from trying to write an account of talks about Chekhov with Madame Chekhov. She is a very charming and delightful woman, with a witty smile, a varying nearness and far-offness in her conversation, and an ironic twinkle in her eyes. But all this does not make her any more apt or anxious to follow any mere one line of thought, to admit that we at least try to grapple with the terms of things as we have them in this world, to come to conclusions, to set up an idea as Western Europe knows an idea. Almost anything about Chekhov, however, will pass that furthers our approach to so great a talent; and one may let one's professional literary plumage wilt for such a cause and set about being merely useful. It ought to be true that Madame Chekhov would throw light on this great man.

In the midst of our teacups, then, we sat looking at a little pile of Chekhov's photographs.

There was one with a cap, one standing, another out of doors, and, in a leather case, another—the first picture of himself that he had given Madame Chekhov—a three-quarters likeness that most of all was a surprise to me. In an odd way it differed from the Chekhov that one sees in the volumes of his plays; it was more individual somehow or other, less smooth and more whimsically pathetic. And it had, too, something less pleasant to see, something that reminded me of Bernard Shaw's photographs, something impossible to describe, though I might call it a certain slightly impish consciousness of self, or better perhaps a kind of loose alertness. But in all these pictures of Chekhov were the same kind, shy eyes and the same effect of nervous quiet. An intense, impalpable air of life hung about every one of them; a lovable, distant nuance of detail, a sweet, human gentleness. And Chekhov, Madame Chekhov said, was a tall man.

We talked of Chekhov, of artists, of Russian artists, round and about. And in the course of things I evolved in my inquiring soul various

matters on which Chekhov's opinion might, to me at least, seem to be revealing or more or less indicative of him. I asked, then, what Chekhov thought of Molière.

"But—" Madame Chekhov objected, but how could you know what you thought of Molière? Beside, Chekhov never said what he thought. He only smiled or he laughed. He was always laughing. He knew, of course, that Molière was a great dramatist, we all know that. But Chekhov never said what he thought, never.

I ventured nearer on an aspect of stupidity for myself and wondered what Chekhov felt toward Greek art.

Greek art! How does one know what one thinks of Greek art? It was like asking what one thinks of life. One feels one way about it at one time, another at another. Is it not so? It was, I admitted. But after all Greek art might be said, I objected, to have some general idea running through it; it meant after all more or less a point of view, an arrangement in civilization.

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One's attitude toward Greek art, I ventured, could certainly be called a comment on oneself, no?

My remarks made no impression, but instead I was made to seem very unreasonable asking what some one thought of Greek art. So far as Chekhov went, however, if you asked him what he thought of something, he only smiled. Around the corners of his mouth there were always little running lines. But he hated, you could see that, academies of anything, that is to say collections. He used to say you should not have your walls lined up and down like that—Madame Chekhov pointed angularly up and down—books in such numbers should be in libraries. A few books, yes, as one reads them, a few like friends—not Ibsen you know, any one could have seen that Chekhov hated Ibsen, Ibsen was like a professor laying down rules, no? Some fine parts, ah, yes, some fine plays, but still—and Chekhov hated a collection of pictures around him. He used to say that a crowd of statues belonged not in your house but in a museum. Once, Madame Chekhov remem-

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bered, some of Chekhov's friends to honor an occasion in the theater, made him a present of some antique furniture and beautiful objets d'art. But afterward Chekhov kept pointing to these things and smiling. Why do they give me these? he said, and laughed. Do they take me for an antiquarian? I'm not a museum. He was always like that, do you see?

But he loved music, I ventured.

If anything is plain in Chekhov's plays it is his feeling toward music, and I felt safe here. I was hoping now to get some little hint on what sense of the formal Chekhov had in any direction.

Certainly Chekhov loved music, Madame Chekhov said, very much, ah, yes.

Beethoven?

Ah, he would never go to concerts. He would go crazy to sit through them, these arranged programs. But he loved natural music, the music of the fields, the natural world, he loved everything in the natural world.

And of course, Madame Chekhov went on, he loved people, too. People, that is, with

whom he could make an understanding at once. He had that sort of spirit, he saw very quickly when there was anything. When he and the other person had nothing in common between them he felt that, too, and then he was like this—Madame Chekhov put up her hand like a wall. But he loved to have people come to see him. Chekhov was always at home. He never went anywhere. But people used to love him. They liked to be with him, though he told them so little after all about himself. The Chekhovs were like that; the whole family loved people and were very gay and amusing, but yet they were always distant, they were never intimate.

Just when Chekhov worked nobody knew, though he wrote so much. He used to love newspapers. And he got odd things and odd truths about people from them. Sometimes he used to steal away and write down a note from them or write down perhaps something that had stolen into his mind. But Madame Chekhov herself never saw him working, never. But he wrote books and books. Madame Chekhov had

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spoken to him about the international copyright. But Chekhov said let them go, his works were not good enough for these men to want it in other countries. And so he never got anything from abroad. And except for a little money from a Paris publisher neither Madame Chekhov nor Chekhov's family had ever got anything from his books. Artists should have some one to attend to their affairs surely, Madame Chekhov said, artists could never manage money.

But, I said, there had been artists who had managed very well. They had learned merely to recognize money as a reality in our lives and so had taken it into account in their scheme of things. What of Shakespeare, Molière, Michelangelo, Titian, they had done well enough and had left money behind them, and obviously they were great artists.

Well, Russian artists then, Madame Chekhov said.

I said finally—hoping again for a hint on what sense of the formal Chekhov might have had in any direction, and remembering the pho-

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tograph of his study at Yalta, how trivial and undistinguished its arrangement was—I said that I always wondered when I thought of Sarah Bernhardt what Chekhov thought of her. They seemed to me to be two interesting minds to bring up against each other.

But there we were again, Madame Chekhov said, it was like Greek art. How were you to know what you thought of Sarah Bernhardt? Bernhardt you felt one way toward one day and one way another, it was like that. Of course you knew that Bernhardt was a great actress, but how you were going to feel toward her to-day, now who knows? And Chekhov never said what he thought, he smiled, Anton was always smiling, those little lines at his lips—

By this time I considered that I had sufficiently erected myself into a professional imbecile; and I subsided into something more human than a desire to know a man by his tastes and ideas. And by this time *The Cherry Orchard*, *The Three Sisters*, *Ivanoff*, Chekhov's plays, seemed alive in my mind, their gentle, quivering life, the indefinable line of them, the

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shy smile running no doubt around the tragic truths of human nature that they know so comically and inevitably well. And by this time, thanks to Madame Chekhov's words and the likenesses of Chekhov before me, I seemed in the midst of those stories of his, moving so definitely and inevitably from their intense centers. Between Chekhov's stories and our ideas there is some sort of wall—what a wall I knew more and more as I talked with this Russian lady; between them and our simple human elements there is a touching unity.

Madame Chekhov went on talking a little wistfully, not quite always to me, about Chekhov.

“But all the years I knew him I never could make him quite tell me his opinion or advise me. I used to say, Anton tell me what you think of this. What do you think? But he would only laugh a little, and go on smiling, and never tell me. Just as he would never tell anybody what he thought. I had just to see somehow, if I could, what he was thinking.”

HENRY'S ART COURSE

HENRY is just closing his junior year at college. He is a fine, intelligent chap who leads his classes; and there is nothing that he cannot understand with his head at least, whatever completeness of understanding he may yet lack at times.

Henry has been telling me about his courses. The one that interests me especially is that on the history of art, or rather an introduction to art, as it is called. I find it interesting because it seems to put in a nutshell the contribution of the colleges to the subject, and because it represents a good deal of our education in general. The part of Henry's course that covered sculpture seemed particularly neat.

This course, as Henry explained to me, began with the earliest sculpture in Greece and showed how art progressed toward the perfection it attained to in Pericles' age, in Phidias especially. And this was the highest pinnacle in sculpture

because they arrived then at form, for the first time they achieved perfect form.

All that about form seemed to me at first, as I listened to Henry, very puzzling. I should have thought that some of the earlier Greek things, the Apollo façade at Olympia, for example, had a very fine use of form, not to speak of the Egyptians. Then it dawned on me that what Henry had learned to talk about as form was really anatomy.

Henry admitted that point finally. The highest aim, then, of sculpture was to render the human form perfectly, he restated his theory. Kritios and Nesiates, coming before this knowledge, were not so good as Phidias; and Praxiteles and Scopas coming after this knowledge were not so good.

Kritios is not so good because he did not know how to represent the body and Scopas is not so good because he knew too much, I suggested. Henry grinned, "But why, tell me," I said, "should the highest aim of sculpture be to represent perfectly the human form? What makes you so sure of that?"

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“Because that’s the highest function of sculpture, I guess. At any rate, the whole course is based on that theory.”

I said that such was very convenient for the professor surely. It gave a bottom to his lecture. And it was the old text-book farrago. But that the professors toward art were like the captain of the sailing vessel toward society, who had been round the world but never in it. With such a theory they miss the point of sculpture, which is to express idea in terms of mass. And to this ideal end you might do what you liked with the human body, it was always secondary. This exact photography of the body was only one of many means to an end. The photography I put in to lead Henry on.

“But it’s not photography,” he took me up, “though some of the gods and heroes swing a mean chest, I can tell you. Phidias is never photographic. It’s the perfect combination of idea and reality, the perfect balance between the real and the ideal—and all that crap. You know. The professor bulls about that too.

You'll admit that to be the finest conception of living."

Perhaps that was true, I admitted it for the argument at least. It is possible enough that we seek more than all other ideas this tempered proportionment of reality and ideality, this perfect balance between the inner and the outer, the seen and the unseen worlds. But here was the point: we might prefer to have it said somewhere else than in sculpture, in some other art. I myself preferred it said in literature and philosophy, in Plato and Sophocles rather than in Phidias. A particular quality or conception suits the genius of a particular art. Things, qualities, ideas, have their voices. I prefer, for instance, the quintessence of the medieval said in architecture. The nineteenth century, after the priggishness and smugness and bad taste are forgotten, goes into music best. The audacity and poetic elaboration of the Elizabethans can be said best in drama. The gracious surface of life suits painting most of all, some kinds of painting, Velasquez, say. And

the Egyptian, the Chinese, the early Greek belong to the character of stone; these sculptures seem inevitably to create in terms of mass. And so on. To an Oriental none of these instances might be true, but the point remained the same. I said all that to Henry. Every art, then, I said, has its particular genius; it does not in the least follow that a fine idea is equally fine in every art, no matter how well done.

Henry needed only to have these things said to see them perfectly. He said, "Sure."

But even with all that settled, I went on, we were not talking about art. You could know these topics and discuss them without being able to tell a Donatello from something by Mino da Fiesole. We were talking about science, philosophy, esthetics. And that was convenient for the professors too, since it is always easier to think profoundly about a thing than to enter into its existence, to come alive with it, to face its mysterious vitality. But its connection with art was that of physics to flying. One must learn to read sculpture like a language learned.

But they did, they did do that, Henry declared. They went to the museum, they had been to the museum three or four times to look at the statuary. And they had lantern slides and photographs. With the slides the professor lectured on the lives of the artists and the political conditions of their time. The class was supposed to read up outside on the characteristics of the sculptors. Scopas, for example, you could tell because he threw the heads of his figures back and opened their mouths. And Praxiteles you could tell from Polyclitus because the flesh was smoother.

"So far so good," I said socratically, "so far so good. And what does that lead to?"

Henry said that they learned the characteristics of the different sculptors and periods that way.

"It's odd," I said, "how nobody would ever introduce you to music without your hearing it constantly, but with the visual arts—! However—this recognizing game is only the beginning. Nobody can teach you much about art, and you can be taught then only by seeing it.

What sculpture must mean in the end is a comment on life, some idea, some quality, some glory or some decision of living set down there. What one man thinks about life may be read in the rigidity of a line, and another by the shadow in an eye. If your professor said to you that the character of the ideas that went into government, into politics and literature and manners, went also into the marbles of Pericles' time, the same thing in a different language, he would have started you in the right final direction."

Henry, pious little fraud, said that he now saw what I meant, said it in a manner both of one of the disciples in the Phaedo and of a lad who in college has known how to improve his grades.

I sat thinking of all this as I looked at my Gothic Virgin in wood, from Burgos. She is very simple, very quiet, in her long lines, her green and red and blue and old flesh color. Henry does not like this statue, I know. He thinks it looks like a child's work or some crude workman's long ago. But I like it because it

seems to say perfectly something that at this stage of life's game I like. It seems to say this in terms of wood, of mass and line. It is a small thing, I know, because in the gamut of a lifetime the mood of it is small. But it says completely its mood of stillness, formal simplicity and naïve contemplation.

After a time I began again:

"And in the end there are only two things to be said of your learning or your being taught about sculpture."

"And what are they?" Henry asked.

"Number One: that you can learn when sculpture is technically artistic, learn a bit at least in that direction. That means you can learn to tell more or less when the thing said is said in a way that suits the medium it employs; when it is essentially in terms of sculpture as distinct from all other arts."

"And the other?"

"But you can't have Number One without Number Two; which is this: All you can ever be taught is to read sculpture, to learn to take in its language. Then what you really think of

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it at the bottom of your soul will depend on your own state of mind, your education, your theory of life, your point of view. Nothing else makes any reality between a man and a piece of art. Nothing else makes sense."

Henry said I was about right, the course was mostly tripe; and went off with his books, with six great sculptors under his arm.

THE NEW LADY'S LOOKING GLASS

IN Texas these days, and in much of the South very likely, the ladies are divided into two classes: those who are buying electrical machines, toasters, broilers, dishwashers and laundry outfits; and those who are hoping something will turn up, and are meanwhile persuading their husbands to cold suppers, canned goods, restaurants and picnic parties with paper plates. The few who have cooks keep quiet about it and try to hold their thoughts to other things, fearing to tempt Providence. It is one of the home-made problems in labor that peep in through the very curtains at you.

The Swedish girls tell each other that they are going home for a rest and to make their winter clothes. But after two weeks the mistresses ride out to bring them in again and find that the vacations are presented to them by their fathers and are to be passed in the cotton patches.

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But little of the help is Swedish. In Wheatville, the colored section of Austin, the old square pianos, bought for ten dollars and cartage, have stopped; and the lone cornet somewhere in that part, is silent. There is a little ten-by-twelve place called Hill's Pleasure Room; it is closed and on the narrow porch the snapdragons in the tin cans and old saucepans are dried up. These Sunday nights the drums that used to beat with the cornet tooting and gasping, have gone away. Only a few old people sit on the porches and mind the babies; they have to sit with the cats, for even the dogs have left with their masters. Every one else is in the cotton fields. For cotton, at present prices, must be picked.

For a long time there has been a shortage of help every year when cotton picking came and every year it grows worse.

Ladies meet each other and say, "My dear, have you got a cook?" "Oh, don't tell me, my dear, I'd like even a woman to come in an hour, anything." The lowest price paid for the picking this year is \$1.50 a hundred. But there are

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stories, little dreams of the cabins, in Wheatville of its going to \$4.00. When a man can pick four or five hundred pounds a day you can figure for yourself what draws him to the fields, and why he takes the children with him and the whole family picks along together. The little family that has been earning from five to ten dollars a week has from seventy to a hundred now. And even old men who can hardly work at all hobble along the rows at several dollars a day. Lately two of them over seventy raced for the biggest picking. One of them made four hundred and dropped dead afterward. Rosalie, our nurse especial and de luxe, likes to tell the story. "Wal," she always adds, "everybody's time comes some day."

That seems only too true to us. For the season lasts from somewhere in August to late in November and after that even, in various counties of the state. And what if the wages go on up, as Wheatville dreams, the planters can afford it. "But how does the price of cotton help us?" the housewives ask. "It only means that we have to pay ten times as much for our

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sheets and underclothes and then wash them ourselves.”

But for the pickers it is not all labor and all cold finance. You leave behind you these people that have been hiring servants to wait on them, now let them see how it feels to work. They'll have to get out of their big automobiles now and stand over the stove and the tub. Besides, there is the joyous getting started. Alex explained that for me, the day he retired from the care of the garden:

“I jes takes de cabin all to pieces. Trows de blankets on de flo', and den de mattress in dat dar blanket, and de fryin' pans and de coffee pot, cause I sho got to have my middlin' and my coffee. And I gits me a lot o' truck, sardines, and molasses and tobacco—I can git mo' at de sply sto', when I gits to de place. I puts de cordjun in, and de boys puts in de banjo and de guitar, and we ties de dog onto de end o' de waggin. And we got a tent dar at de place. An' nights we jigs and sets round de fire, and shoot dem craps and plays dat polka. And

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some time somebody's got a drap on de quiet. Jes a drap to drink. Yas, suh."

Then Alex told me of an angel of Fate that lurks pretty often on some of the plantations. There is an engaging gentleman who does not pick cotton in the hot sun. Nobody knows just where he is in fact during the day. But twilight brings him out. He is about the tents and around among the men when supper is being cooked. Later he joins in the game. His talent is bones and poker chips. He can out-play any one there. And often he carries away in his pocket the money from all the picking of the day. Alex believes that these sharks are staked by the landowners, given a range to work on shares. In some cases perhaps, not all. Who knows?

The pickers come home now and then as rich men do to their native towns to take a holiday and spend money and have their rise in the world measured by their oldtime neighbors. The girls buy eight dollar stockings and the young men wear silk shirts at twelve dollars apiece. They walk the streets and the handful

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of their friends left in service learn how foolish it is for them to stay in town.

Meanwhile the taste for service itself gets less and less. It is very hard to take off a chiffon waist and French heels just after one arrives and put on working clothes. Besides one has had one's hair straightened, and over the hot stove the kinks come back again. There has been an angel once flitting into our house and out again, who did not make the change, but cooked all day in open-work and silk and ball-room slippers. Cooking was not really her work, she told us. She was only cooking till she could take up her career. And what was her career? we asked. Singing. We remembered a Marchesi primer around the house and gave it to her. But she left us soon.

The social prestige of going out to service is already worse than lost.

One day lately Rosalie the nurse came in to take leave. She is getting fifty dollars a week and comes at nine, more or less, in the morning and leaves at six sharp, with Thursday and Sunday afternoons off.

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"But, Rosalie, we thought you liked our place," we ventured feebly, a bottle baby in the distance.

"I does."

"Then why do you quit? Going to pick cotton like everybody else?"

"I needs a res'."

"But you can take a rest and come back again, take two weeks."

"No, suh, it's this way. My friends is always saying to me, 'Mrs. Boardman, we's surprised, it don' look like a lady like you would be goin' out to service. And Mr. Henry Tears, the undertaker, president of our burying society, he says he certainly would rather do something at home if he was me. Hit's jes' got so you can't keep your social position and be goin' out to service.'"

Rosalie's son at eighteen is making eighteen dollars a week as a plasterer's assistant, mixing the lime, bringing water and mostly standing about waiting, to keep up plasterers' etiquette. She can live on his wages. She has her black robe to be buried in already bought, her false

bangs, and her money paid in Mr. Tears' burying society for the coffin, the hearse, and six carriages. There is no use spoiling all this by going out to service. Who can argue that with her? She has her children to think of.

I learn from Rosalie that a new motto is being promulgated. All her friends are saying it, and the colored newspaper has taken it up—**Every Lady in Her Own Kitchen.**

And I learn that her friends are joining a new society. For a long time the Household Ruth had the membership. They used to have a ceremonial dress of black with a purple cheesecloth veil edged with white in which they served at funerals and so on. But the new society is taking the day. It is called **The Ladies of the Folded Hands.**

All this is regarded by the housekeepers with families and houses as a shade darker than Bolshevism as they read of Bolshevism in the morning papers. They think it a sort of African Anarchy.

"But what are we going to do about it?" they

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are asking every one. "It's all very well for people who live in cold climates where they eat cold bread and bake once a week and have cold pies and canned things. But we have hot breads three times a day and live on fresh vegetables, some of us have cows even. But even if we change all that, we have these big houses. And with the thermometer at 105—!"

"Are we to live in tents in the yard and keep the house for a museum?" a member of the Kwill Klub asked me, speaking brightly over her fan in party style, since we were at a party. "Or are we to have a Soviet with a colored family in the parlor and us in the drawing-room?"

Cotton has done what war could not do: the Revolutionary Upheaval in Society is getting quite real to many ladies in the club, I gather. Is our Way of Living Going to Change? has come into their thoughts, and what is The Future of Civilization?

The husbands say that it will come out all right, things will adjust themselves.

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As to that, it is all very well to be philosophic when you are not the one that has to wash the dishes.

Only the electric salesmen consider that they have the problem solved. They are truly philosophic. Let them show you their machines. They are sending out to people's houses washing machines run by electric power, dishwashers, broilers, ranges, toasters and flat-irons; and they do not ask you to buy them, just try them out for a week and see the difference they make. And now that the colored help is gone, the salesmen say truly, these inventions will not be burnt out or blow up the house the first shot.

The other day, a friend of mine tells me, she decided to go out and make a hunt for a washer-woman. She meant to harry the town or find one. She went stopping every Negro woman she met, asking if anybody knew of any one who was taking in washing just now. Nobody knew of a soul, there was a woman, but she was in the cotton patch.

Finally she saw a young girl and spoke to her.

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"Can you tell me, I wonder," she said winningly, "I am looking for a laundress, can you tell me where I'd be apt to find a laundress?"

"Yas, I can tell you," the girl replied, "you go home and look in your lookin'-glass and you'll see her."

And what about the future? every one is asking.

THALIA'S BEHAVIOR

SIMMONS is not a very tall man; he is medium set and has an oddly boyish but heavy jowl, and an obliging smile over strong white teeth. He was born in Missouri in a small town near the northern border and passed all his youth there; and his early association with the arts and the world was of course limited by that circumstance. His father was a judge of the county, and spent the last two decades of his life writing a book on the equity of the trial scene in *The Merchant of Venice*.

Simmons went most successfully through a Middle Western college and became at length a professor. He is now a psychologist of standing, hated and admired by his academic competitors, invited to read papers at conventions, and frequently referred to in footnotes. In psychology he belongs to the behaviorists; and his writings and his experimental records in that direction are numerous. The position taken by the behaviorist, I believe, is this: you

can, given the opportunity, know what a thing is by observing what it does. The behaviorist maintains that through its behavior an organism is completely self-revealing, or so Simmons at least tells me.

I ran into Simmons not long since on a Washington train, and we sat down in the smoking-car together. We talked a little of our former acquaintances; and then Simmons began to tell me of his week in New York and the theaters he had visited, thinking that, no doubt, a subject kindly suited to my hemisphere. He rather liked the things he had come across on this visit, he said, much better than he had liked the play he had seen in the autumn, *Malvaloca*. Had I seen *Malvaloca*?

Alas, poor Thalia, I sighed, muse of the joyous theater, you are coming in for your share now!

For this was the kind of thing I should always rather avoid in Simmons. My encounters with psychologists in the field of art have been inconsequent and baffling. From the very outset, when they approach art, my psychological

friends have a way of stretching far beyond anything manageable the definition of their science. Psychology, I should think, might be described as the physiology of the mind, the study of the human mind in a way that is analogous to the study of the processes of the human stomach. But nearly always when these psychologists hold forth to a mere layman like me, they extend the definition of psychology to boundless spaces. They seem to mean by psychology something that is really men's experience, common sense, philosophy, acumen, probability and human nature rolled in one. And this mild vaulting prompts them to universal judgment. No doubt many of them are excellent critics of art; but for the most part the psychologists that I have known tend to approach art and the artist with a little air of "Hello! How's mother? Have you a kitty?" They are anxious to discover and compliment in a piece of art what they call its good psychology. They draw art out by showing it generously how much all along it knew without knowing it. But if you use psychology in that

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sense, this specific praise of a piece of art becomes most general. It is like commending water for its wetness.

Nevertheless there sat Simmons and I at our point. What did I think of *Malvaloca*?

I thought of the story of this Spanish play written by the brothers Quintero. Two young men are casting a bell. A young woman, the former mistress of one of the men and now on the town, falls in love with the other. The pair love each other, but are deterred from marriage by the girl's past life. And she feels unworthy of him and shrinks from meeting with his pure sister. His friends flout her. In the end he takes her and she is to be rewelded through their love and made whole again, as the bell has been. I remembered that the production by the Equity Players had certain admirable merits and the general defect of not filling in completely enough the outlines of the characters with the vividness and pressure of life that their Spanish creators had relied upon. I said this to Simmons. And what, I asked, did he think of *Malvaloca*?

"Well," Simmons said, plainly glad to have me done with my opinion, "we thought it very silly, foolish—" we being Simmons and Mrs. Simmons, a tall, lean woman who abetted in all things his laboratory enthusiasm.

"Silly, Simmons?" I asked. "And why?"

"Because people don't act like that any longer," he said.

There, I thought, is the people argument applied again to art. I reflected, too, that it was a loose term for a scientist to use, but it was what Simmons had said nevertheless.

People, I asked, who were people? And what else could any work of art be but what people, some one at least, thought? Should we be more specific.

"I mean," Simmons replied, "that nobody thinks any such nonsense about life any more, it's childish and out-of-date."

But in what particularly? I wanted to know. Would he point out to me just how *Malvaloca* was so silly?

"Well," said he, "take that point—it's really the leading theme—of the girl's feeling herself

unworthy of the man merely because she was a prostitute. I mean that stuff about her shrinking from meeting the chaste sister. We all know, of course, that women have more sense than that nowadays. I mean they have a larger horizon."

To say that, I ventured, it seemed to me you would first of all have to know a great number of just this kind of woman, if you are to judge by this method of accurately observed data.

He knew several fallen women, he said; they talked frankly to him, they felt that they could.

But they, I said, would have to be not only fallen women but fallen women deeply in love. Did he know many in that state? "Women," Simmons said, "no longer acknowledge the double standard, they too as well as men can sidestep if they choose. And they can disregard men's opinion."

"Sidestep, yes," I agreed. "But how many tell men about it, these modern women?"

Simmons ignored the point. "And," I argued, "it seems to me that we could certainly say that a poor, rather simple girl, living in a

conventional society where she was an outcast, might accept that society's verdict of herself."

Simmons looked as if he deemed me merely old-fashioned to talk so.

"And besides," I went on, "what this particular woman feels is part of a large, type idea. Fundamentally Malvaloca's feeling about herself is a true expression in her own passionate terms of what is the tendency of one who is deeply in love, to exalt the beloved, and even to glory in exalting the beloved at one's own expense. And in Malvaloca's case, a reckless, impulsive creature so whirled and thrown about by life, the reaction of self-abasement toward her beloved might be even more natural."

Simmons smiled and said he was not sure of that. I felt that I had spoken without due care.

I went on: "Well, I can at least say this—in Spain and in Italy you will find everywhere a hard line drawn between women who are respectable—respectable, not necessarily chaste—and women who are not. A man knows these other women but he never for a moment thinks

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of introducing them to his family. Isn't that some argument for the play?"

Simmons gave me the look that one gives to a mere tourist, a creature whose inexact observations are sheerly for self-amusement. He has never traveled except once on a week's war commission to Rome, from which he returned with the just observation that there was a good deal more there than you might think. He now laid his hand on my knee: "Ah, yes," he said, "but you wouldn't insist that people really think that sort of nonsense any longer?"

I doubted if people change much at bottom, but I said nothing to Simmons of my doubts. I said only—

"Well, at least the author thought that way, that's one person."

"Oh, well, yes—" Simmons said to that, as if to agree that nonsense must have some source.

"And as a matter of fact," I ran on, like a mere flighty lover of art, "it just happens that in this case there are more authors than one, the two Quinteros. So there are at least two persons who think that way."

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Simmons at that smiled with friendly tact as if the subject had subsided into banter and could be dropped. He said that he hated to be bored at the theater, and began to tell me about the situation in his college with regard to laboratory appropriations. The trustees, it seemed to him, were not taking a liberal view of the needs of the psychology department. The president himself, it seemed to him, leaned toward the economists.

Simmons went back to his reprint, and I sat thinking how he had missed every point in *Malvaloca*; even geography confuted him. I sat wondering just how much at bottom he and Mrs. Simmons applied their behaviorist creed to their living. I sat thinking how, at the present stage of human progress, the behaviorist's creed is only a matter of faith, a laboratory mysticism in which the souls of the Simmons dwell.

It may be that, if Simmons were a God who had made the universe and could see the very last behavior of the very last molecule in a man, he would know what these movements meant, he could truly regard this behavior as

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self-revealing. It may be that this God would judge exactly what particular quality or emotion a certain molecular behavior would be a symptom of. But neither Simmons nor Mrs. Simmons saw Malvaloca's molecules. And meanwhile I cannot accept Simmons as this God or even as his earthly vicar. Leonardo da Vinci had a theory that if we could portray perfectly the exterior of a thing we should convey its inner truth. Even at that I cannot think of Simmons as another Leonardo. In fact I doubt altogether if Simmons has the keen eye, the infinitely sensitive perception and infallible memory, the assembling and recreating imagination, to perceive the utmost height of the external details of things. And I—and even Thalia might prefer so too, muse and high dweller on Parnassus though she be—am sure of this, that I should rather be analyzed by Shakespeare than by Simmons.

MATES AND SUBLIMATES

L—— is of medium height, with brown hair thin in front above a high, convincing forehead. His nose is prominent and clear; his face dark and mobile, not unlike the portraits of Edwin Booth, where the mind burns, the moods loom. He was born with a genuine talent for writing; and, by reason of that, perhaps, did not write till he was in his late teens, having no temptation to say nothing merely for the sake of being a writer. Unfortunately, however, just at the time when L——'s writing began to find itself, he had to begin making a living. He became an assistant in a university, one of the young professors of literature who combine teaching with trying to write, until they either are exploded out of one or the other, or else get the dry rot in both. His talent gave him a passion for words; his college lecturing gave him a stream of comment, his desire to impart knowledge gave him serious purpose, ominous

lecture qualities. In the course of time and with the flattening down of the college mind since the war, L—— decided to abandon teaching in favor of writing. The same resolution led him to begin more lecturing than his usual five or six occasions a year, mostly to women's clubs. Thus L—— comes to be settled in New York. And the same element within him that once shifted him from a writer to a professor has now led him to lecturing instead of writing. He has taken an agent and is booked up for the season like a concert singer.

Now and then L—— lectures to a forum, to which the women bring their sons and husbands, making culture a public utility. Otherwise it is always to clubs of women. His poetry brings him closer to the inexhaustible stream of our life, and feeds in him the creative principle, gives him a reality for pain and beauty and for what is personal and eternal rather than social. Through this insight he understands better the nature and minds of women. Through this you cannot despise him for his success with female audiences. And

for that matter his lectures are not as foolish and barren as those at men's conventions, those hearty orations delivered to progressive fatuity. L——'s lectures are not so paupered of ideas; and they at least deal with fine subjects instead of mere empty words beginning with a capital letter, Service or Progress or Getting Together. And yet it must be said that L—— has developed a special style.

L——'s style, or method of discourse, is such as women might respond to deeply or glibly or *con amore*, according to the woman. There is in it always beauty and the generative completeness of beauty, and women respond to that. His mind thinks of all things with beauty as a background and destiny. The biting literalness of his poetic brain gives him a common sense like that of women; he meets a response in that kind of poultry-yard practicality of the feminine mind, that faculty of working so ardently for what it wants out of life, that instinct for facts that run deep into our human natures. And L—— responds to women. They liberate him. Women do not

attract him so much as they represent life for him. To him they are in a way the world's worst failure, not cynically, but in the sense that life is a failure. To him women are tragic, since they represent the tragic course and progress of nature. His attitude toward his audiences is not condescending and wheedling; what he gives them is at least *bona fide*. He may or may not have some phenomenal understanding of women, but evidently he expresses something that they want expressed; his lectures are a great success, and on more or less dignified grounds as lectures go.

But you cannot lecture innumerable lectures without settling into molds. Despite his good intentions L—— has by now something like fixed patterns of method and appeal, though we may say charitably that if he drops rather comfortably into these shapes, we can hardly blame him, since nature has often the same habit with her energy and dust—as in the rose, the wave, the bank of cloud. Doubtless, too, with repetition L——'s ecstasy grows easier for him. And he finds that the forms of thought may

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relax a little, not too much edge is wanted always. But on the whole his approach to his subject is chaste and austere, engagingly abstract and warm. His style may be called the hot-monastic.

But every phenomenon whatsoever has some relation to its environment, and there is no subject of L——'s, however high, that can shield him from his place in American life. He impinges on a national institution, the lecturer.

I sit at one of L——'s lectures, by invitation of the hostess president, a friend of mine; I listen to L—— and observe his audience. They are of all ages, few of them willingly old. Some are passed into white hair, but reduced and turbaned and blossomed up until they fall pleasantly into the average thirties. All the ladies look to be doing the same thing. But when I regard them more closely I can see their variations. Some are vacant, idle, driving hard to pass the time. Some have charm and chic and a chic desire for improvement. Some are plainly fine, clear spirits, interested in ideas, anxious to have American life intelli-

gent and promising. Some are younger married women, married two or three years, with the early gusts of passion and romance now spent and the first baby launched on his hygienic career, and with the tinge of college conscience fresh upon them still; it drives them to this effort to do what they call keeping in touch with ideas. And, finally, there are many of these lectured ladies who mean to have the best culture quite as they mean to have the best plumbing; they like to have culture run over them as the hot water does, without much effort.

Then I think of the husband in this case. You see a whole page of him sometimes in the newspaper, a convention photograph of some lodge or other or brave Rotarians got together. They are faces in the main executive and blank. The chief expression is of a sort of energy suddenly halted before the camera and squared with its vacuity. They are faces honest of at least any subtle rascality; simple, not so much coarse as thick-skinned and tight-nerved. They all mean to be successful and only a shortage in

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supplies need prevent their being. They are good, fine fellows, who give their wives motion, comfort, spending-money and local pride. When they come home from business in the evening they bring the papers, and after dinner take their wives out somewhere or read the papers at home. It is hard at the moment to remember how any one of these husbands looks, but easy to remember how they all look, how untroubled they are by ideas that men have died for. It is they who are most to blame for what happens around L——. On these American husbands, if there is to be any, your caustic derision or daylight mirth must fall.

They are not in love with L——, the ladies of his audiences. In love with their husbands, or with some one else if need be, they are, but not with L——. His hour is otherwise; he is mass and matinée only, only the faun's afternoon. In him these wives can sublimate. They may not, like Plato's Lycurgus, prefer to any earthly progeny the children of their souls. But they cannot live by bread, hot water, conjugality and gasoline alone. They need con-

versation about something; into their leisure has come a rumor of ideas. L—— visits them as the culture bridegroom. He impregnates their beings with the seed of the gods. Over the country far and wide, over the track of his lectures, L—— goes like a deity in a Tiepolo ceiling, trailing a polygamy of nymphs.

WILKINS AND THE ETERNAL

TALKING with a young ranchman who got on the train at Alpine set me to thinking of my friend Wilkins.

Wilkins is one of the editors of a great newspaper, and suits perfectly his position. He is informed on everything, matters of the natural and the economic and political worlds, personal facts about the eminent, movements, radio fads, theater conditions and Washington gossip. And he has things always pretty clear in his head, he gets them straight and he distributes them winningly. But all of his information when considered together has no simplification, no unity. There is no one synthesis of all his details that has any ideal force; and no sense on our part of an important metabolism of all the stuff he chews upon. His conclusions are reliable without being significant. His cosmos seems active and crowded but negligible.

Though not unpleasantly so, Wilkins is also in a perpetual stew. He is always exercised over unjust trials, starvation societies, milk scandals, political plots, unfair reports, religious discords, needed expeditions, heron tails and states of affairs in San Domingo, California, Madagascar and the Orient, as well as the private wrongs and misfortunes that he would like us to attend. Since the war this tumult has been livelier than ever in Wilkins. Every new movement, significant or merely newspaper-made, right or wrong, looms high to him; and the growth or decline of even the chewing-gum habit suggests to him the future of the world and its dilemmas. In moments of impatience—when for instance he insisted on discussing tenement housing one night as we went home across Central Park, and in the light fog the lake was like a moon rising among the rocks—I say to myself that Wilkins is like a monkey with glue on his hands and a feather that he keeps busily removing first from one hand and then from the other. But that is not fair. His problems and causes are not feath-

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ers; they may fit rather externally to him, but they are real enough; it is Wilkins's own reality that sticks in your craw. All this concern in him never rises, or sinks inward, into a passionate interest. He could never be burnt at the stake for a cause, though he is always finding bitter cases of people who have been burnt. And in all his stews he is mostly right. But right in a way that must be wrong, a way that somehow never brings a center to himself, never brings some clarity of purpose or spirit to the man exercised. This right way of Wilkins's contributes to no central quality. It follows any lead. It has no rest, and yet it brings no purging orgasm of the soul. In sum there is nothing about Wilkins that can be separated from the confusing and accidental sides of him, and can be thought of as a whole, a unity, a continuity, with an aspect on it of the eternal.

The young ranchman as we rode along had been telling me, rather briefly, of his life. He kept sheep for an absent landowner, he said; he had an old Mexican woman and her husband to care for him and was otherwise alone.

Every three or four weeks he rode horseback eighty miles to town; galloped most of the way; the sorrel never minded, the sorrel was used to it. Sometimes he was out all night. Sometimes, he said, he slept out on the hill, because he kind o' liked it.

This man had an open face, with a sort of animal quiet on it, combined with great character and force. There were shades in his voice frankly moving and tender; his eyes were a changing gray under their dark brows and in the shadow of a black sombrero.

As we sat there he went on now and then with some remark, speaking directly and simply what he chose to say. He had been a garage foreman for five years, he said, in town, but had come at last to the ranch, just the life he wanted. You should hear the coyotes howling, along about three in the morning, oh, man! But I found myself only half listening. I was thinking of Wilkins, his facts, his unrests, his causes, committee engagements and perturbations; and replied rather absently. At length the ranchman too grew silent.

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Beyond the window I could see the stretches of country as we went along. We were traversing a world of rocks and plains and long lines of lifted hills, under an omnipotent sun. It was a land spacious and open to dwell in. It was fixed in its great forms; and under the varying light of the night and day it seemed to change not as something visual changes, not the kind of change that concretely strikes the eye, but ideally, as music changes, in a purer medium.

I looked at my companion as he sat there gazing down at his hands, which were clasped on one knee. Certainly there was something separable about him, a central and almost impersonal quality such as one felt in the country around.

Finally he roused himself to speak, and said, without looking up, "There's been a heap of wind these nights."

A few days afterward I was thinking of Wilkins and art. A man, if he cannot find in nature some kind of central basis for himself, some release that would help secure in him his

own unity of character and desire, if he cannot distribute his elements toward some harmonious end in him through discovering some mirror or pattern of his soul in nature, might find all this in art.

Such a man as Wilkins might use art as a guarantee of our responsiveness to the world about us. He might look at Duse's acting, for example, and take from it the comfort and the terrible silence of knowing that human life can be so sensitive to the forces that it meets, can be so passionately strong and delicate in what is its main instinct, the response to and judgment of the world about it. And in art there is possible a more just arrangement of this material than we are able always to manage in our daily living. Under the artist's hand abstractions emerge from objects, from persons or events or whatever he treats. Such a man as Wilkins might with the help of art discern more clearly than he can in life the existence for him of such abstractions as beauty, proportion, balance, for example, or rhythm. For art parallels life without repeating its casual

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obstacles and limitations. Art's great success is that it creates in a world of accident and endings and interruption a sense of the eternal and continuous. Not that Wilkins should use art as a narcotic, not as something that drugs and puts the inquiring soul to sleep, but as an assurance of a certain freedom that comes from looking at such truth, however abstract, as all art rests its designs upon.

These abstractions—such as beauty or proportion and so on—may exist objectively in the universe, to be found there and recognized by our minds. Or they may be merely relationships that the mind is able to pick out and create for itself. They may or may not be actual and eternal; that is not the point, which is that our ability to discover relationships that will compose these abstractions is eternal; and that, as time passes, our sense of the possibility of our finding them, finding behind life these large and ultimate attributes, these dependable and final qualities for our contemplation, may be in itself a kind of peace.

Poor Wilkins! to him art is detail, mild en-

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tainment, social needs, movements and matter for current chatter and personal gossip. And whatever is said of it, now or at any time, he will only catch up on the point of his pen for the blithe uses of his information and turbulence.

But if Wilkins could only read in art a little, it might help him where life seems not to have helped. He might learn how short the flicker of his little causes is, and with exactly what degree of diligence they should be attended. He might learn that the information that never takes on a pattern for him is always on his outside, however apt for daily journalism. And he might learn how still and quiet the eternal is; how the balance of lines or the reticence of shadow in a painting, or the figure in some symphony, may carry on them the pattern that might express also parts of his own life for him, with security and an ancient and long-tried expressiveness. For this assurance and experience in art he need not set up a system or dogma, hard and fast and limited; he need not take to seeing through life's veil and com-

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mercing with celestial voices; he need not acquire some false finality of creed; nor shirk life in some walled garden of beautiful creation. He need not be dogmatic or mystical or religious or aloof, in order to get at least some center for himself by finding in art always a central truth of design and the presence, as in nature, of beauty and power.

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My first sight of President C— was in the telephone booth of a railway junction. “Hello, President C— speaking,” he said. And then a moment later a tall, broad man in a blue serge suit with heavily padded shoulders, his hair red, his features large and decisive and full of a kind of foolish strength, emerged and stood looking up and down the station, large, firm, like a swelling piece of civic virtue. I knew the outlines of the president’s career. He had been first a baseball player of renown, he had then entered the ministry, and now after several years of service had become the president of a New England college. In this state, I had been told, his athletic piety and direct manhood had made him adored. There were, as might be expected nowadays, some restless and Reddish students who rebelled at President C—’s quality and influence; the majority of the college body took him for their ideal.

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President C— and I became acquainted not long after this first sight I had of him. We sat together on a government educational commission, a left-over from the war. He never talked easily or was able to flow into simple human connections with other men, but he frequently conducted a monologue or crashed into debate. And so, in the course of things, I had a chance to learn his theory of education.

I am not sure that I ever understood it quite, but the gist of it, as I gathered when I stripped it of its eloquence and vigor, was this—The purpose of education is making men. A man among men. It makes leaders of men, however, also. The ideal education develops both mind and body, *mens sana in corpore sano*. Men learn to mix by being at college. Nothing teaches them to mix with their fellow men so well as athletics, as clean contest. Let us never forget the noble exercise of the mind! President C— himself might never have been able to mingle with men if it had not been for baseball. It had saved him. College men learn to be men not so much through book learning as

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through their freshman experiences, the rough and tumble of the dormitories. College connections are valuable in after-life. The purpose of education is to make of young men citizens.

These, as the world must know by now, for he has expanded them into many addresses, were President C—'s theories of education.

I have a friend, or rather a friend of the family, who sent her son last year to President C—'s college, partly because it is well known, partly to get him into the country and out of New York. Tom, the son, by some maternal engineering, by caresses and spanks and bribes, had been got through preparatory schools, and rather miraculously past the test of college entrance requirements. That was last year.

A week or two ago I met President C— on the street; he is naturally on another commission and had run down to New York for the meeting. We talked as we walked along Park Avenue. Finally I asked:

“What about my friend Mrs. L—'s boy,

President C—? He is at your college, isn't he?"

A look of disgust came over the president's face.

"L—," he said, "oh, that chap? I think I remember him; I make an effort to keep our men individually in mind. I was gravely disappointed in the course he pursued in college. You can see he is a shy boy, with some ability, the dean tells me, if he would apply himself. But he made a total failure of it. He neglected his grades. He did not know how to mix with the men. He took no part in athletics or the life of the college. No fraternity invited him to join. He wasted the year. In the spring he decided to leave. I urged him to remain. Buckle down, I said. Play the game. If he had stayed, a fraternity would have asked him to be a member undoubtedly, he was not a bad-looking youth. But he was unapproachable apparently. He disregarded my opinion and left college."

"But suppose," I ventured, "Tom never wanted to be one of the college men? Why

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distort what he is, to be like the others? There must be a man now and then who learns little from fraternity life, or from having freshmen rub molasses in his hair and keep him up all night, don't you think? For many men your college scheme may be quite right, but why not grant men who may be different their own kind of thing?"

"This college experience will teach them the life of the race," the president said—though here I can only quote his words without quite following his meaning: "L— never gave himself the chance."

"The chance for what, President C—?" I asked.

"A chance for learning to live among his fellow men."

"But what's the use of learning to live with men if you can't live with yourself?"

President C— looked at me patiently and powerfully like a big, fine, influential spirit. I could see him judging me as a man of little weight. I shifted the subject slightly. I asked

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what Tom was doing this year, if he had not returned to college.

"L—," the president replied, "so the dean tells me, wrote in answer to the questionnaire that the college sends out in August, that he had entered a theater school."

President C— was silent and I looked at him, silent and swollen like that, he seemed to me like a platitude at prayer.

But I knew that what had happened was that Tom, timid, wrapped in his own world, dreaming, vague, useless if you like, had got under the president's skin. It hit the president's vanity to fail of even so negligible a worshiper.

"And how has he done?" I asked.

"Now that I can't tell you. We can probably imagine."

"Is it a good theater school, I wonder?" I said, tentatively.

President C— had no way of knowing that either. But he told me the exact name of the place— Tom, I reflected, had indeed impressed him.

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"But that," I said, "is only around the corner more or less. What do you think, shall we run in and see what is going on?"

President C— looked at me a moment and decided.

"By the living God I will," he said. I knew of old that admirable oath of his, in which by putting in the living you take out the profanity. "I've never seen one of these places."

Neither had I and I said as much. And we started off to find Tom's school.

But I had seen art schools full of students. I began to think gleefully of those students coming on the run every morning and staying till the last light had faded and the janitors pulled down the blinds. And then the talk, talk, talk, looking at one another's work, criticizing, intense, happy with the head and hands working together, believing in art, in the future, delighting in the world. Many of these students were without talent, many lazy, many destined to clerkships; but for the time they moved in a happy, drifting, believing atmos-

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phere. Then I thought of the colleges, with their muddled aims, their exhorting grades, their rules, degrees and prizes to keep the thing going. I thought of those bored groups of men around fraternity house fires, the victrola grinding, tobacco smoke rising—a scene sweetly remembered years afterward, but at the time rather flat—how little it connected with the life of the mind, with the life of human thought! Some of these college men study, some love learning, some find stimulation in a handful of professors who are hated by the faculty at large. But all are encouraged by the dean, the alumni, the fraternities and the class spirit, to hold college offices, to be leaders with buttons and pennants, to compete, to fill the time. The art school was busy, but had to get on with mere art and high hopes, it had no baseball, class honors, clubs, or letters for sweaters and caps. These sweet thoughts made me feel more gently toward President C—. I was relying on the tone of the theater school to take him down.

We entered the school to the sound of a

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tremendous hammering and talking. In the hallway there was a class in diction. In the auditorium itself there was a pantomime rehearsing; and on the stage some one was directing a scene from a play. Over in a far corner they were painting scenery, and two men lay sprawled on the floor around a drawing. We were presently introduced to the director. Was it always like this, we asked? Was every one always at it? From nine in the morning until eleven at night, said the director. There were lessons in literature, in diction, fencing, dancing, stage decoration. There were rehearsals, and every night there was a performance of one-act plays, for the students must get the theater endurance. Few of them would ever be distinguished artists, but every one worked, there was so much to be learned.

And how was Mr. Tom L— getting on? we asked.

The director beamed. Mr. L—, he said, was one of the lights of the school. He came early and stayed late. He was insatiable, he killed himself trying to learn everything. And

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his acting was very promising; he had in comedy a certain wistful quality that ought to go far. We might find Tom, the director said, in the basement somewhere, he was experimenting with stage lighting.

We came upon Tom on his knees with a reflecting apparatus. He was rather pale and a little thinner perhaps but his eyes were shining. He gesticulated, swept out a note-book with designs, he led us around to his machines, he chattered about his plans. "Believe me," he said, "it's a great life if you don't weaken."

Meanwhile I watched President C—. He was very reserved, very kind, in the few things he said he took a tone of national encouragement. What a big, manly spirit he represented there among the lighting machines and painted sets! And I could see that he still wanted to be the boy's ideal.

As for me I was shamelessly thrilled over seeing a man find what he wanted. I felt encouraged, set up, sentimental. On the street again a moment later I could still see that young face, a dreamer's, an artist's. He was

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like a blossoming tree, he was like a child listening to music.

I lost my sense of humor and began to say to President C— how splendid it was to see a chap discover like this his education and his happiness together.

The president said nothing.

I persisted. Did he not think so?

“Probably,” he assented. “But still—”

“But still—?”

The president, knitting his brows together, measured his words, making me at the same moment how grateful that he should run so true to form!

“I question his judgment, nevertheless,” he said. “What of his citizenship?”

THEORY AND THE WOODS

I HAD met X— for the first time at dinner that night, and as we walked home together he talked about his theories of life and art. He seemed, to look at him and to hear his voice as he talked, like a creature whom the angels had visited all his fifty years. I was already beginning to bask in his enchanting light and to think how much it meant to have such a man in the field of painting, where so many men go pattering along with no point of view whatever and with nothing but impressions of line and color to lisp the happy babble of their eyes. X— was telling me the idea he had had in his mind when he painted his last picture, which he called *Within the Woods*. As he talked he made silent rhythms of gesture with both his hands, as if he were somehow sifting the light of the stars.

“I had of course,” X— said, quietly and surely, “no intention of setting down any

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identity for this scene. I visited the spot, I went again and again and let it sink into my mind, receiving it as one might receive a dream. To put into the painting what I know is in the woodland scene, I knew that I must arrive in myself at a certain mood. I must dwell in moods that are inspired by that That which is in all objects and around all things. I must attain to one of those rare moments when we are withdrawn from sensuous perception and are centered in some aspiration to what I may call Higher Beauty. For they who empty themselves wholly and approach with open mind and heart and lively discrimination, they are able to pass from gentle motion to stillness, from meditation to contemplation, to the realm of inspiration. They pass to the essence of beauty, of life, in all human effort."

X— was silent and we walked along. With this idea of things in general and with the mood that X— indicated as underlying his picture, I was of course familiar; we have had it set forth more or less in a dozen cults and nature poets. What I wondered was how

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X— might contrive to convey all that in painting. The problem that confronted him resolved itself into this: by what means could X— express in terms of line and color what he had just expressed in terms of words! That it could be done was clear; X— evidently rested very easy and gay about his achievement quite as Duccio might have felt when he attained that marvelous statement of what he felt about the idea of Christ's appearing to the disciples. How, I wondered nevertheless, was X— to express as painting what he had given me as literature or philosophy? Plainly behind both the picture and the words there must exist some underlying and more fundamental and abstract idea which might emerge in the two arts. It had emerged as words. It could emerge as painting; for if we said it could not, we should be driven at last to saying that painting could not express ideas, as many people have said; or we should be driven to saying, as so many have done, that painting can exist without idea. Whereas it is a fact that all art deals in the end with little but ideas.

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With convictions, no. Not immediately at least. But with ideas, yes, with essences, with attributes. To say anything else will not make sense.

Obviously a painter cannot say in paint that we should remember every moment that the human soul participates in the divine. But he can obviously give to a human figure or to an object, as Botticelli sometimes does, a design, a pattern of lines, that will prevent its resting in itself, that will carry it out of itself into the surrounding spaces and forms and give to the whole a kind of radiant unity. And to take another instance, the same fundamental idea may appear, for one way, in the balance of arches in an architect's façade; for another way, in conduct as a fair act; and, for another, in ethics as a theory of justice; three particular statements of one general thing. Every art has its material, the stuff out of which it is made up, but the final expression that is achieved will be determined by the artist's ideas. There could not be a piece of art that did not represent some final combination of the artist's ideas

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as they work together. The difference between the work of art and the raw material used by the artist can be only a difference in idea.

That might be very well, theory around and about, I reflected, but the plain painting case was how should X— get his thoughts about the nature of the world and the mood needful for certain contemplations of beauty, said in a painting of a wood? Even as expression of his idea in terms of literature or philosophy, X—'s achievement, I thought, had been a bit infirm; certainly, for one example, a mind emptied of all preconceptions ought to be a novel organ. Still I felt that I had seen what X— meant.

But how in terms of color and line were the leaves of the trees to be translated into the idea? Hindoo painting turns sometimes on such ways of thinking about the world, and the early Chinese painters may have approached reality somewhat in this vein. But an artist would be merely erudite if he took over a mass of foreign technique. I was at any rate curious to see just what relation to the

actual scene the painting would have, and by just what technique was this conveyed; I was curious to see how far the technical method and the degree of realism would belong to the idea. I asked X— about the method of painting that he had followed, and how he had worked. Well, in the first place, he said, no particular object had been represented as interesting in itself. He was not in the least concerned with what sort of young trees these were, for example, whether they were oaks or maples or birches. Every object on the canvas must exist in terms of its relationship to every other object. All outlines, forms and colors were strictly relative. The whole scene must be freed of everything but its own characteristics. Nothing must do violence to the mood, X— said, and the particular scene and particular moment must be felt to be at the same time distinct in themselves and yet a part of eternity and of universal all-brooding space.

So X— went on, ending by saying that perhaps he could show me better what he meant when I saw the picture; it was in his studio and

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I was running in for a moment was I not?

I did not feel that I had been answered so far as technique went, for I had meant to ask not only about theory but after the brush, the overpainting, the use of hard line, the depth of modeling, the hot and cold, and so on. But no doubt everything would be clearer when I saw the actual painting. We came to X—'s house and went upstairs to his studio. The picture was on the easel, he said, some friends had been looking at it that day.

I went straight to look at *Within the Woods*.

One thing that X— had said, I could see at once, was true. The trees might be what they chose so far as the painting went, birches, beeches, young oaks. Otherwise the picture was a very pretty landscape in the style of the French salons of the late nineties. A soft air hung in a grayish wood, and through a mist of suspended blue the eye was led to an impression of quiet light and a wide atmosphere. The trunks and foliage were handled in soft masses, the colors put on in blurs and impressionistic spots and dim outlines, all very fresh and

gentle. Every exhibition has a score or more in precisely the same style. So there we were.

I said sincerely enough that the picture was very decorative and poetic and that I did not wonder people ran after X—. And he, meanwhile, having lighted his pipe, settled on a couch and was talking about the necessity for every artist's entrance into the contemplation of Deity.

How different it is,—the thought kept running through my head like a moral to a fable as I listened to the painter's words and looked up now and then at his painting, and later as I wandered vaguely home—how different it is to talk about a thing and to say it in an art!

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I

GIANNI IN CHURCH

GIANNI is the son of my laundress in Ravenna. He lives in the Via Rasponi on the ground floor of a little house, a narrow place with a tiny court into which the sunlight falls at noon and in the corner of which is a stone trough where his mother and the other women in the house do their washing. Every Friday he brings my biancheria, shining white in a basket like a platter, and stays a moment to tell me about himself, sounding his s's with that kind of whistling lisp that you hear in Romagna. When he grows up, he says, after he has gone some more to school, provided, that is, his mother can keep him there, her back is not very good, he will work in the post-office. If he cannot find a place there, he would like to be a clerk in a store. Gianni has a Romagna face, rather blond, with an open smile, white teeth,

yellowish-brown hair and wide gray eyes. He looks friendly, honest and not self-conscious. He is strong and healthy and likes to use his mind. In general he is an ordinary Italian boy of thirteen.

Thursday after Corpus Christi in Ravenna there was a great procession that left the Duomo at half past six and marched around the town and back again. The gold light from the west poured down the church as the procession entered and moved toward the altar in the aisle that the four young priests kept open through the press of people. Group after group, banner after banner, blue, red, yellow, white and every color, the town band leading with its horns and drums, priests, seminarians, friars, nuns, boys in black shirts, boys with blue sashes, the endless line of little communicants in their white dresses and veils and wreaths and bouquets of white flowers carrying their candles lighted, then the boys and men and youths of the choir in rose and purple, singing, then the priests of the cathedral and the bishop, in vestments of ivory-colored brocade flowered and braided

with gold, walking under the gold-fringed baldachino, chanting and carrying in their midst the Host in a glittering monstrance, and finally a line of priests in black, without a banner and chanting a response to those walking with the bishop and the Host. For half an hour they came, chanting at the head of the line as it passed by the altar, and again midway the length of the church, and farther away as the end of the procession drew nearer in the streets outside. And over the heads of the crowd you could see the banners moving, pausing for a moment at the great portal and then coming through the air toward the altar, slowly, tilting slightly, like sails. The organ high up in the loft began to play, stealing out over the heads of the people like a soft trumpet and flutes. And outside in the piazza dusk had come on and the windows of the church grew dim.

The procession ended, the banners took their places at the sides of the choir and by the altar. Benediction began. The organ played, the choir sang. Across the carved balcony of the choir loft stretched a hanging of crimson bro-

cade bound with wide gold bands. Crimson brocade with gold hung down the pilasters of the apse and crimson was draped around the arch. Under this arch, high up, was swung a line of crystal chandeliers with lighted candles in them. Lighted candles rose seven feet high from the silver candlesticks on the altar, with lower lights sown thickly beneath them and tapers like stars, and from the silver altar vases bouquets of flowers, red roses and white lilies.

Beside the altar stood the great Byzantine cross, with its equal arms and its plaques of silver. The music stopped and the priest at the altar began to read the service. Clouds of incense rose, above the candles of the altar with their twinkling lights, past the marble and gilt and crimson, and into the shadowed vault of the dome. The priest read, the people made the responses. A bell rang; the Host was elevated. The crowd dropped to their knees. And then the music and the choir began again.

I did not see Gianni in the procession as it passed; but later I saw him standing near the

altar with the boys in blue scarfs, looking up, his mother near.

Afterward I thought of him. Gianni was only an ordinary boy of thirteen. If his mother lived and could afford it, he would have a few years more of the kind of education that schools can give. Otherwise he might get work somewhere soon as an apprentice or an errand boy in a shop. And either way he would settle into the life of Ravenna and so run his course. But it was interesting to consider what all this that we had seen at the Duomo might mean to him. I wondered what ideas it might give him.

Even if Gianni never gets these ideas quite into words—which is a process we have come to think necessary, though it by no means is—he might possess them at least as habit or experience and as extensions in his living. He might possess them vaguely somehow as patterns for living.

It had not been an extraordinary procession. Such a one it was as had repeated itself thus simply from generation to generation and century to century. Gianni's father had seen it

every year of his life, no doubt, and his father's father and his father and so on back, every one in the family except perhaps one uncle Gianni had told me of who deserted his family and ran off and was now in hell. And it was only a friendly community affair after all, among the people, the little communicants, the Franciscans, the priests and sisters, the boys' clubs, the candles, God, the gold and silver and flowers, the evening light.

But from that procession Gianni might know what it is to take part in a society, with every one together following some idea of pleasure or beauty or devotion; he might learn what it is to be a social member, no matter how narrow and cramped your days are or how few people you can really know and talk with. And this was just as it was with the prayers he said and heard, which set forth certain typical sins of the human race and led the mind of the sinner toward them rather than toward the numberless private varieties of evil that he might stew out of himself; and just as it was with the service he heard repeated in the churches from year to

year, always the same and the same all over the world, which led the mind not so much to an individual as to a general and social side of religion.

But the Duomo, as much as any one in Ravenna did, he owned. From it and his moments in it there flowed into him things he might never be able to describe or even to recognize as ideas in his head, but which would nevertheless have been a part of his existence. He might live in a narrow dark little house, but here there was space, great stretches of stone floor and wall and columns rising up to high arches and to the wide dusk and glow of the ceiling and dome. He might have from that the experience of space, space in things, and space perhaps in thoughts and in actions. There was present here in the lines of the pilasters, in the altar, in the doorways the quality of elegance, a distinction of choice and development that Gianni might never quite recognize though he might learn to resent its absence.

In the Duomo there was to be seen the use and integrity of materials, the hard lines of

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stone left hard, the rich texture of silk, the luxury and biting suavity of gold and gilding, the paler and more accessible ornament of silver, and the softened permanence of wood; in all of them the essential nature of the material worked in was brought to the service of the end desired.

In the shadows, the lights, the motions, the music, used to express what was in the breast of the people kneeling there, Gianni might get a sense of the extension beyond words and speech of a part of human living, and so be ready always to admit in himself and in all life the presence and possibility of an element elusive and invisible but no less real on that account. From that ancient cross gleaming with its silver plaques in the altar light, and the antique marbles here and there, he might feel the oneness of time and of men's thoughts and hopes. And though all his life he goes about clothed in poor worsted as he does now and though he is cramped into a narrow channel of modern labor and never has much chance at all to grow or spread, Gianni from the great

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spaces there in the Duomo, the carved and painted and gilded wood, the brocade and crystal and marble, and the superb sweep of those columns and arches, will nevertheless have had the idea of magnificence.

II

ESPERANTIST

“What are these water lily things they give you to eat in Italy?” the English lady at the table next to mine asked, for her first remark since her arrival three days before.

At the corner table the four Americans, for days during their excursions about Assisi, had talked of nothing but food, describing salads, and soups and raviolis from over all southern Europe, with a strange, idle animation, vacant even of gluttony; and the English lady for a start perhaps, seeing that I was a countryman of theirs, had taken her cue of food from them.

She was a plump woman dressed in black, with a large black jet cameo on her bosom.

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From her rosy face and above her staunch, ruddy forehead her brown hair was carried up with much waving to the top of a high, fat pompadour, and once up got down as best it could to the back of her head. She wore one of those high British corsets that blossom into curves in front on a level with the armpits, and she was naturally very short-waisted. And, from her belt down, the shape she had beneath her skirts and the great height it lifted her from the chair gave her the effect of sitting on melons. She had a Hampshire accent.

I asked her pardon, not understanding what would answer her question.

They were like water lilies, if I saw what she meant, she repeated, they taste bitter. You got them everywhere in Italy. They ate them in Paris with some sauce, she could not understand these Frenchy words, a hot yellow sauce.

I suggested artichokes.

"Well, I don't like them," the lady maintained, and began to describe, without having names for them, she could not get these Italian names, she said, a list of dishes from the Italian

kitchen that she found it impossible to eat. "I don't like these messes," she went on, "they don't seem clean to me. Paris also. I suppose it's because I'm English, but I don't like fancy food. I like plain, simple things, I've always eaten them. I don't like any of the cooking, has too much salt in it, I've been on the Continent eighteen months, I can't eat it."

I said politely, "Too much salt?" and the lady said yes, and then after a moment's pause, she added reflectively, "Yes, simple, I like things simple. Perhaps that's why I'm an Esperantist."

Esperantist? I exclaimed. I had never talked with any one who knew Esperanto.

By this time dinner was over, but the lady ordered coffee and began ardently to tell me about her cause.

Did I see the green star on her breast? she inquired. That meant that she had been a delegate to the congress. There was a congress every year. They usually had these in the poorer countries, where the exchange was worst, otherwise delegates from these countries could

not attend. One year it had been in Finland, another in Lithuania, this year in Jugoslavia. She never missed a one. Her brother had brought her a book of Esperanto, she had taken to it somehow, she had become a fanatic, you might say, about Esperanto. She always carried along printed matter about Esperanto. With that the lady drew from her purse some handbills, a grammar, the New Testament in Esperanto and some of Shakespeare's plays. I had no idea, she said, how easy it was, it was an ideal language. Language needed simplifying, to prevent wars. A universal language would be your true League of Nations if we could only recognize the fact. If men only understood each other we should have peace, I'd see. How simple Esperanto was too, here was the grammar, the main part of it, on one page. All nouns ended in *C*, all adjectives in *A*, did I see? Add *J* for the plural of everything, pronouncing it as in *boy*. Verbs have six inflections! *As* forms the present, *is* the past, *os* the future, *us* the conditional, *u* the imperative. *N* makes the accusative, and adverbs

end in *e*. Words are mostly drawn from Latin sources, you might say, *Jes* is yes, *ne* is no. *La* is *the*, *mal* denotes opposites, *ist* means professions; feminines are in *in*, *patro* father, *patrino* mother. And *unu*, *du*, *tri*, *kvar*, *kvin*, *ses*, *sep*, *ok*, *nau*, *dek*, with *cent* 100. Was that difficult?

The lady carried on a correspondence, she informed me, with people in various countries; and she could read their literatures as well as they could if things got translated into Esperanto. Thus she learned the spirit of a people.

But was literature literary in Esperanto? I wanted to know: the very irregularity of a language was a part of the character and nuance as it was used in literature.

Of course it was not the same, the lady said, and you could always read your own literature in your own language if you liked. But this made literature universal, Shakespeare, Byron, the Bible and all. Well? Here was the Esperanto Society in a village near Prague.

She drew a photograph from her purse and showed me a group that looked like brigands

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who had been seduced to farming the land. Behind them was a pennant on which was written Esperanto.

"Since my husband's death I have been in a position to travel a great deal," she continued, "and being an Esperantist I can go anywhere, the strangest places. When I arrive there is always an Esperantist to meet me at the train—I write ahead to the local society—and he takes me to his home and I meet the other members."

"But it's a cult, isn't it!" I remarked with Dionysiac interest.

"Yes, you might call it that."

The lady put back the photograph into her purse.

"Even Turks speak it," she added, musing.

"I see," I said.

"I'll tell you," she went on, "how Esperanto helps me. I traveled alone through Jugoslavia with a man I'd never seen. Two days and two nights. I'm sure I should never have done it if he hadn't been an Esperantist."

I judged that there were no Esperantic males

in Italy, for the lady went on telling me how little she had seen in these Italian places; she was afraid, she said, to go anywhere but the main streets. Look at Perugia, she added, just an hour from us here at Assisi, but the day she had spent in Perugia she had only walked up and down that one big wide street, from the hotel to the church. She was afraid to go in those side streets for fear of getting murdered, so she had just kept going up and down that one street till train time and till she was ready to drop. "I kept right there," she said. "I don't like to be frightened, if you see what I mean. I don't like Italy much."

In my room afterward I studied the grammar that she had lent me.

If by chance I am cycling, *Fiksu tiun ci sraubingon*, I say that to tighten this nut, and are the roads good, *Ou la vojoj estas bonaj?* and if I want the theater box-office I say *Kie oni povas antaue rezervi lokojn?*

I thought of Shakespeare.

What a piece of work is a man! How noble

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in reason. How infinite in faculty! In form and moving how express and admirable!

Would that go as well in Esperanto, I wondered. *Sercu miajn ajojn*, look for my things! No, I reflected, Esperanto might be a most commendable medium for traveling two days and two nights with a man you had never seen; but for a universal literary brotherhood it seemed hardly so good.

III

THE WORD RACE

At San Marco the mass ended, the responses, the chanting, the music, the smoke of the incense rising and the candles holding with their flames the eyes of the worshipers before the altar. Mr. X— and I came out of the church and began to walk along the arcade of the Doge's Palace.

"Well," he said, "it's all right in case you don't want a little religion in it."

The fine face, a trifle old-fashioned perhaps, was firmer than seemed quite necessary in a place where noble minds had expressed themselves with such ease and splendor. But it was full of character and serious concern nevertheless, and just now it looked set and troubled. The mass was doubtless admirable but there was no religion about it. How well I knew what Mr. X— meant by that!

Plainly he belonged to a race that believed that its deepest thoughts could be said in words alone. Life comes to us out of many an experience in light and sound; and our existence is built up and fed by who can say what music, what shapes of clouds and green nature, what rhythms that are in the moon, the seasons and our own bodies, what sudden contacts in fire, water, wind and in all movements everywhere? It ought to follow, then, that out of all these we could discover and create images which might serve us profoundly and wholesomely because they embody and revive and release the experience undergone, could discover and create

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symbols which represent vaguer, more general experience, and patterns in light, sound and movement under which is expressed and typified an infinite living.

But Mr. X— put his trust in words, in word statements. For him those movements of priests' and congregations' bodies, that raising of the Host, the light before the far-off images, the incantation of poetic style and rhythmic forms, said nothing about the soul of man. All these esthetic exercises and fine arts exhibited in San Marco were cultural, we must have culture. But profound matters required serious explanation and comment. What he wanted was a sermon. He wanted to hear some direct remarks about God and sin and salvation, and some degree of lofty and moral opinion expressed.

If Mr. X— becomes some day so radical as to break away from all organized religion, he will turn probably to a serious interest in education. And the education that he will admire will be of the kind so well known to us, in which

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you learn a great deal about many things which in themselves you were never born or will never learn to see.

IV

THE SHRINE

From where I stand I can see him coming down the path from the fields above. On one hand he has the stream bank that follows the slight line of the water, in this season of summer almost dry; and on the other, planted among the olive trees the wheat, now yellow toward the harvest. At the bottom of the slope the stream circles into a pool, with green poplars beyond and trees with young pears, and the tiles, half hidden, of the farmhouse roof. Another path borders the fields where the land stretches out into a long level with vines and the elms they hang upon, and wheat again, filled thick with poppies. At the crossing of the paths stands a shrine, a square pillar plastered white. A little roof of tiles covers the top of the shrine and not far down is a niche, painted blue with

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gold stars. In it is a little statue of the Virgin, white and blue, with stars about her head.

The sun has sunk, the late golden light fills the air and sifts through the olive trees and gleams on the white shrine. The bells from San Francesco far away in Assisi come down over the serene land. Sounds can be heard now from the kitchen of the farmhouse, and presently a woman begins to sing, in a stone room, you can tell by a kind of completeness of volume in the tone. Her voice has an odd double quality, something of the sweetness of light and the tang of metal.

The man is tall and brown; he is young, not yet thirty. Three-quarters of the way to the foot of the slope he stops and turns and looks back up the hill. Then he turns again and stands looking for a long time out over the fields. Then he goes back and breaks a white flowered branch from an olive tree and a handful of poppies growing underneath and comes and lays them at the shrine.

The light, the olive boughs, the wheat, the abundance and verdure are reflected within him

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as they are in the water of the pool. Love and thankfulness fill his heart. But he is not abstract; and it would not satisfy him, even if he could, to hold in some memory or system of thought or state of mind, what he feels. He needs some one to offer it to; and he needs to do some visible act that he can see as a result of the thing in him. And in what he does, the labor, the plenty, the rest and peace, reach their completeness and fruition and are made clear; his day takes its natural place in the world. For him the idea and the body or creation appear as one, in the same way as that in which the progress and life in nature there around him may relieve and express itself in the ripening grain, the flowers, the fruit and the evening light under the trees.

V

ECHOES

Caruso and other artists as well, violinists especially, the custode is explaining to a party

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of travelers as I enter the Baptistry, used to come every summer to Pisa when he was taking the cure nearby, and try his voice with the echo that the signori had just heard; though he himself regrets extremely, the custode says, not to have Caruso's voice to make them the more pleasure. The custode shows his travelers to the door and I turn to look at the Baptistry, the primitive motifs in the panels that Niccoló Pisano set into his pulpit, the font, the balustrade, the marble, with the subtle variation of its surface, and finally at the dome, with its round inner balcony of arches against the curves beyond. By this time the custode being rested offers to make me the pleasure of the echo; and at the first sound of it breaks down all my resistance to being shown and guided and fed with those naïve commonplaces on which tourists are thought to batten. The custode takes the note; the echo brings it back to us lengthened, redoubled, suspended for minutes, diminishing to a beautiful murmur and to a last faint dying something that is stiller than any silence. The custode sings four notes in a

scale. The echo brings it back, waves and great rhythms of chords over and over. He claps his hands and the echo clatters like sharp rain or musketry in stone streets. The custode smiles. He sings a long, low note and the octave above it; and the music around the dome rises and circles and sinks and rises again, soaring in that high space and seeming, when the last sigh of it is past to have become the walls themselves. The custode bows and smiles, and I make him repeat his performance for me and then for the third time and the fourth. He is pleased with himself and his position; I am pleased with the universe. I seem to have come on the pure material of all music, before idea begins in it. I seem to have seen the pure color from which music paints, or the body in which it lives.

By this time I observe that another traveler has entered the Baptistery, a lady, and that she is looking across at me and the custode with a long, straight-leveled disapproval. She is a lady in a gray suit with a small hat, a silver chain and nose glasses, not tall but yet not

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dainty. Her eyes are serious, uninspired, assured. And by some vengeful spurt of fate and nature in her she has bought, in Paris no doubt, on her way down, a smart and ultra scarf, which she has draped with an odd coquetry about her hat almost below her eyes, till she resembles some stern sheep in a wedding veil. Her lips are thin. She holds the open Baedeker before her as she looks at us and turns again to the inspection of the walls, as if she had been merely waiting till we chose to remember ourselves. The lady's meaning for me and the custode is clear enough—how can we be so loose and flippant in the midst of this fine and famous art?

But I am so excited with the thought that there is breath enough in the world somehow for all music, however poor the custode's or my note may be, that I am callous to her rebuke. I go mooning on, stirred at the abundance of life. The custode is flattened to his bench in the corner. And then I see that the lady is on her way out.

The lady does not know that art is as natural

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and happy and tragic as all life is, and that these sculptures and colors, these arches, this dome, the rhythms of the design, the gilding and the rich ornamentation, are echoes, also, of the half-thwarted and pressing life in us. But she does know that art is a serious and dutiful department of culture. And she knows that if you notice the attendants in these places they will be expecting you to give them a fee.

VI

SKETCHING IN SIENA

Sketching about the world seems to me more and more to be a doubtful affair at best, except for mere hints and notes and records of moods or design, some special or elusive felicity, discovered in nature or art and needing to be recorded for future use. And certainly at the most only very fine artists can hope to lift the kind of painting that aims at the reproduction of scenes and places into anything that any one with taste would want. But in Siena now the

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season and the low exchange have filled the town with artists come to sketch. In my walks I chance upon them everywhere, with their tools and easels and boxes and pads.

Representative art or no, it takes courage to set oneself up against Siena. How shall one render in paint the primitive and yet sophisticated austerity of this town? What of the swift flight of walls and towers, the romantic severity of conception? How achieve a manner that expresses that breath of time that informs this city, the intellectual distinction of it? Likeness will not do it nor any mere style out of some school. Velasquez's two little landscapes in the Prado might have been painted yesterday, so modern are they and up-to-date; and they are suave and gracious in brush and color. But Velasquez chose the garden of the Villa Medici and places suited to his mind. El Greco did Toledo, but that solemn and macabre prospect was his before he saw it. But what style must be discovered for Siena, since for the painter style in the end is all there is to a town, and all else accident? Painting here,

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one might think, could well be a matter of prayer and fasting.

But how cheerfully after jam and toast these painters go forth! Alone or in groups they go, and when they find a thing they want to do, pop down and do it. They are a dear and lovable lot, loving the world as they do, its surfaces and shapes and changing lights. That depths of feeling and time for reflection, however, might be needed to discover the painting essentials in such a scene you might easily imagine. You might think the exact mixture of realism and abstract design that would express the elusive Mangia Tower would be something of a hurdle. What does one think of the thing one paints? If one has no ideas about it does one just go and paint, like a *débutante* talking when she can think of nothing to say?

How these painters solve such problems I can see any day in the salon of the hotel, when every one is there after lunch. Some got it very well this morning and some had trouble with the light. I can see black and whites and drawings in sepia; and our old friend the Pa-

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lazzo Pubblico in our old friend the soft bath of English water color, with no shock, no style of austerity, nothing but washy bricks and a stale resemblance. I see the impressionistic poultices of bright paint and dun. I recognize the picturesque views, purple hills; idyllic pictures of old Italy and of sunny Italy with fruits, flowers and peasants; and finally those works of art more endearing than any of the lot and not much worse, by ladies who "have always sketched a little," bless their hearts, Siena scenes in pencil or faint color, offered to some harsh wall or battlement, gentle ministrations that remind me of Galileo's daughter, the little nun, bringing him baked pears.

All these painters with their sketches are like Mr. Edward Hutton and most of the company of writers on Italy, who soften everything they touch when they write of a city or a piece of art with their stories and legends and events, and give us anything and everything except the sharp and difficult quality that is the point.

At least it can be said for Cubism, dada, and many other isms, that they have lessened the

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amount of sketching. Their concern with idea and design have helped do that. For the ordinary artists doubtless, who will never be much anyhow, this out of doors between meals with canvas and color is no doubt better than sitting indoors cooking up insides, Freudian and what-not, to express. And this high town in Tuscany is a change after close studios in Paris, London and New York. The pity is that painting were not a cure instead of an art.

VII

THE CULTURED COLONIAL

On the terrace beneath my window a group of English people, more or less modern and interesting, concerned with the future as well as the past, have been discussing an American gentleman staying here in the hotel. They keep speaking of him as the American and the whole tone of their comments implies that he is an extraordinary and most amusing phenomenon indeed. What astonishes them first of all, it

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seems, is his seriousness, his way of darkening the conversation to sublimity and to the problematic and sociological. His culture too amazes and diverts them. The way in which he hands out quotations from Matthew Arnold and Herbert Spencer and even Ruskin, has sent them into quiet but irrevocable mirth. All this, and something in his manner toward them, no doubt, which they do not speak of, something very deferential not to say reverent of English superiority and polish, has amused them and has inclined them to an easy and ripe and clement indulgence toward this American gentleman. Nobody feels very harshly about him, every one is rather astonished, relaxed and superior. And all his qualities they seem to have accepted as American. Everything they say implies that the subject of their tea table is a typical inhabitant of the country from which he has so earnestly separated himself for improvement.

I too know this American gentleman; we have had numerous talks; and I can understand what it is that these people feel. He is a seri-

ous, middle-sized man of forty, with a thoughtful, deep forehead and heavy, nervous hands. He comes from somewhere in Connecticut; and in his jerky, precise utterance and his strange effect of appearing to pause for the right word—which when it comes is merely a flat one—he has told me that his father was a minister and a professor in a theological seminary and that he himself was graduated from Harvard and then took a degree at some German university; afterward practicing the law in his native city. But he had attempted, he said, to continue his other interests as well, and considered it necessary to possess a broad field of associations. He belonged to a number of literary and philosophic societies and committees. He made it a point to devote a certain amount of every day, so far as possible, to worthwhile reading and to hear not so much as he should perhaps but at least a certain amount of good music, as he called it; he was also interested in the theater and regarded it as an important instrument in the social welfare, and he was inclined to

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watch the development of religion as a practical force.

More than once at the end of a little chat he had said that we must get the conversation down to a more vital point, there were several subjects he should like to discuss with me. It was true also that he quoted from Emerson, from Huxley, Ruskin and Matthew Arnold, and not always, I think, the subtlest of their remarks. And furthermore, with that strange isolation in culture that comes from seeing it as a private duty rather than as a social diversion and nourishment and delight, he had even told me such unexpected pieces of information as that Keats wrote *Endymion* and who Fabius the Delayer was, and once after mentioning *Aida*, he added, "Verdi, you know."

This gentleman's attitude toward the party of English people I knew something about too. He found them, he said, very reserved at first. They seemed to wish to exclude him and to be satisfied completely with themselves and with whatever was English. But when once you got

to know them and they took you in, they were very delightful indeed, so polished and easy, such fine conversationalists. Ah, the old world had much to give us, he said. At first he had thought them somewhat flippant in their viewpoint, or rather point of view. But one saw that under the banter and the airy give-and-take they had serious interests. They were a great people, the English!

"I said to him," one of the English gentlemen was saying on the terrace, "the other morning when we chanced to come on the subject of poetry, that we had been jolly cool about our opinion of the poetry of other countries. You know what I mean. I said perhaps French poetry is quite as good as our own, you know. English poetry, I meant to say, may not be so jolly supreme as we have thought it. 'And yet,' he said, in the quivering voice of elegy, 'surely England's poetry is one of her greatest glories, is it not?' "

A cup clinked on a saucer. "It's incredible, oh, priceless!"

"I assure it's true, every word."

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A lady's voice like a choking rubber tube came in:

"I can well believe it. Gravely and solemnly he asked me what I thought of Matthew Arnold's definition of literature."

"My dear, what is Matthew Arnold's definition of literature?" asked another lady's voice, this time like a lovely flute.

"My dear, how should I know; what was St. Paul's opinion of the cinema?"

"He's rather a nice little chap really, you know," the first gentleman began again, "not half a bad sort." He began to say "wal" and to drawl through his nose, neither of which the Connecticut gentleman did. "Wal, I should be interested to know what place the Greeks might have found for the cinema—"

"No, the moving picture—"

"The moving picture in their educational scheme."

They laughed.

"One is accustomed to the society of people who are not imbeciles and to ideas perhaps, naturally. But not to having the profundities bal-

anced at one's head like that. I met the president of some American organization once, in England, studying some condition or other. One took one's hat off. No sooner was one's head visible than she engaged it. 'What is your opinion, Mr. So and So, on universal suffrage?' and onward and upward."

"My God!" said the flute voice.

The truth is, both sides of this occasion have jumped too fast.

The American trails with him as a hang-over from his ancestral Colonial days a feeling of the mother country and her vast superiority over such a ward of hers as the American states. And so, working on this idea that he has of English superiority, he—and very naturally—assumes that whatever these English do is intentional. They have, he assumes, a complete command of themselves. They have a reason for their actions and their attitudes. If their manner was cool toward him at first and they made it none too soft for him in general, he gathers that they were still waiting till it was clear that he was worthy to be admitted to their midst

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or was such a person as they might spend their time upon. If they seemed ungracious sometimes even yet, he was certain that it was something in him or in what he said or did that might seem to them crude or intrusive. If they were abrupt and tactless, it must be that he has offended them; that thus, though quietly, they rebuked him. Certainly he meant to give them his best and to do nothing that might make his country ashamed of him in English eyes.

In all this, however, as a matter of fact, he was pretty far off the point. If these English held him off at first it was not always because they intended to do so particularly. It was not only a noble reserve but partly because they are an island race, oftentimes not easy themselves, and shy or awkward or inflexible and proud all at once. If they do not seem to talk so easily as these Italians, or the French, it does not mean that they think more or are any more profound than these races, but that as animals they are quieter and have less animation and quick spirits. And if they are less gracious than the Italians or the French, more abrupt

and summary, it is not always that they are superior or feel themselves superior; but rather because they have less grace, they have less external responsiveness, and a less universal habit of good breeding. They are not easily a social race at all. And so far as abruptness goes, the English often treat one another, and without its being noticed apparently, in a manner that would offend any other race. In Paris, Whistler said, you are taught which end of the brush to put in your mouth; in England it is a question of taste. And so with politeness; as with many matters, the English decide for themselves, and are often as rude as at other times they are beautifully considerate.

As for their esteem and all his concern over what they think of him, the American needs to know that the English, it must be said to their credit, prefer in the end that a man stand on his own feet. All this anxiety to win their approval, to do things as they do, to think and act in the approved English method, puts the American in a middle-class, colonial position and almost forces the English into one of con-

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descension and easy judgment. To this proper person from Connecticut they would prefer really a Western ranchman who took his own way. And it is precisely this brand of earnest and aspiring visitors, like the gentleman from Connecticut, who have done more than anything else in the past to give the English their notion of America's relation to England and, when they think of it at all, of American culture.

This party of English on the terrace as well as the American are also off the track. They smile at this gentleman but they are wrong to assume that either this reverence for the mother country is in the average American, or this conviction of English superiority, and desire to please and to be admitted into their approbation. Popped down in their midst almost any ordinary American might feel damped and anxious and uncertain of his ways; there is enough frontier and new country left in him for that. Some of the Atlantic Seaboard no doubt might tremble before the correct English thing, and some society and sporting club people. But not

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the average American. That would indeed make it easy for the English. And as for American culture, when they assume that this gentleman's seriousness and his belated quotations from Ruskin, Emerson, Matthew Arnold, are characteristic of the average in America, they are miles off the point. The average American, quite as much as this English tea party, cares nothing for Matthew Arnold or Ruskin; whether it is because their ideas and their Victorianism no longer interest him or because he is not interested in any ideas, would make another discussion.

VIII

THE CONQUEROR

Time after time this month in Italy destiny has brought Mr. B. G. T. X—, he always writes the three initials in hotel registers—and me together. He is a man interesting enough looking to make you turn to observe him the second time, though uninteresting when you do.

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The expression of his face, if somewhat diminished and thin-slit, is aloof and lofty. His eyes are thoughtful and vague and one might take him for a studious man, which he is not; his shoulders stoop modestly. His clothes are in the style of an English gentleman, attractively easy and comfortable, his brogue shoes twice too big for him. His manner is at the same time bold and quiet, secure and underposed. He has spent a number of his vacations, he tells me—from what profession I never heard—in Italy; quite enough of them to imply in him a love of art or of wandering in fine places. But this it by no means seems to do; Mr. X—'s course in Italy so far as I saw it took another turn.

He begins at the beginning, no *in medias res* for him. Coming into Italian towns is often a happy thing, little farms drifting into groups, courtyards with the family about its work, and then suddenly an ancient wall, bell towers over it, and an old gate. The people meanwhile lift down their boxes and bags, put covers on the bird-cages, shake out themselves, take their bou-

quets of flowers from the racks, and lean out for the sight of friends. Mr. X— is already busy with his guide-books and lists, though he has his course already charted. He glances once at these Italians and once out of the window to see what sort of arrival the train is making, then he returns to the hotels. What hotels have lifts? In the smaller town at what hotels is English spoken? Mr. X— so far has never troubled to learn any Italian save half a dozen phrases, which he rules so arbitrarily that nobody understands them; in fact I have heard him say that these people are so stupid they cannot understand their own language. What hotels are in a noisy part, what in a quiet? one must have quiet. And finally what hotels are frequented by the English? Shall we try to get a clean carriage, he says? In sum, Mr. X—, arriving thus, sets his force against the town's.

Mr. X— goes always first to the hotel frequented by the English. That would be better than the others or we should not go there, he says. And there will not be so many Italian messes to eat and the service will be good.

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Every one knows of course that of the hotels in Italy that the English have long frequented one thing may be said in general: the rooms are better and the food is worse. Look, for instance, at Taormina, he tells me on the train—though I see perfectly that the gentleman across understands English—if I see what he means, at Taormina, and what the English residents have done there: stopped begging, cleaned up the streets, instilled less vice into the natives and made it possible to get tea everywhere, and how much quieter it is. Every one knows of course that there is indeed more tea now in Taormina, if you want tea in that climate of orange trees and grapes and young almonds; there is Fellow's Hypophosphites, too, to be had, and Burroughs, Welcome and Co.'s bicarbonate of soda and Atkinson's bath soap. But the sunburnt natives have toned down till they rise from their doorsteps and greet you as you pass like tenants on an estate; and they have given up most of their singing, that bawling out of their damned throats that Ruskin speaks of, in order that the Inglesi may be quiet;

though of course it is true enough that one looks more respectable and perhaps less vicious bowing in a doorstep than sitting in the flickering shadow of oleander leaves in some café with a bottle and a mandolin. Something of this I have tried to say to Mr. X—; but he only looks at me as if I needed, mind and body, a bath.

At the hotel Mr. X— has questions first to ask. Are meals served in the house? He must have a room with plenty of windows and good ventilation. There must be a bath. Could he see the rooms?—always plural with him though he took only one. And then at the table the head waiter must come. Mr. X— must have the eggs brought to a boil only and not too fast. He could eat nothing fried. Was the water good? Where in town could tea be had, he liked to see the town as well as the hotel?

To all this the Italians gave way. Business is business and there is also a question of politeness, you see. If, they consider, the gentleman felt so seriously about the time of the egg on the fire and if he resented so much the cheese in the

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spinach or the meat roasted with a hint of garlic and a rosemary stuffing, one can arrange. It is not a passionate affair with them, life is not entirely a matter of these things. Nobody would like to spoil the universe for this gentleman. And so the change follows Mr. X—'s demands and strong wishes; and so he and his kind affect the state of the things in their path.

For the Italians with their light shoulders and their practical clear minds, all this may be easy. But after all one hankers for some sequence at least in all matters; things in general ought to work and to make sense. From all this particularity about cooking, hotels, air and water in Mr. X— it ought to follow somehow that he has the finest of tastes and organisms. Staying in the hotel and fussing hours about the sun in your room, when there is so much to see in the town, ought to mean that one has for light and feeling and color the most exquisite response. It ought to mean that cleanliness and freshness and the chaste beauty of water and gardens was one's last dream and happiness. As a matter of fact nothing of the kind

could be said of Mr. X—. For all his mania over comfort he was neither lazy nor luxurious. He bathed but his nails and ears and his linen were often far from clean. He liked his special kind of food, but when he got it he could eat a poor quality and an endless monotony of it as well. He had a bad eye for color, about on the level of red flannel and green meadows; and he liked the anecdotal in painting. No, when all was said Mr. X— was particular rather than exquisite. He had not the sense of quality in what he got; what he had was a firm conviction of what he wanted. He was individualized stubbornly, not subtly. He was definite rather than discerning. He hammered on a thing more than analyzed it. He had not discrimination so much as habit and special detail. But why for pity's sake should he come to Italy? I used to wonder about all that. There must have been many reasons, some no doubt beautiful, but the main one of them I discovered one day in Siena, the last time in fact that I saw Mr. X—.

I ran on Mr. X— in the Via Ricasoli. He

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was poking about looking for a tea room, since it was already, as he said, nearly five. I led him to Mosca's. We sat down and ordered tea, and Mr. X—in a brave, bantering fashion began to tell me his adventures in Siena. First getting the beastly early train from Assisi. Then you go puffing up the hill, do you see, and first to the hotel in Via Cittá. But they hadn't got any rooms free except one on the court, a stuffy place with no air in it at all. There were rooms at another hotel, but the dining-room was closed for repairs, and he must of course have meals in the house. At last he had found accommodations in a pension, a clean enough place, and they had promised to give him a tub in the morning, though they had to fetch the water in a sort of copper jug, a jolly lot of work that would be. After lunch he had walked about a bit, rather jolly old place, this. He was to be here two days. Was there a good train to Florence, no beastly changes?

Two days in Siena, with its distinction and unique completeness in the world and Duccio's painting, and half of these two days taken up

with finding ventilated rooms, food in the house, a bath, tea!

After our tea we smoked a cigarette and Mr. X— somehow or other got to talking about his family. His father and grandfather he said, had been in India; his father had been a judge there, his grandfather, who was a hardy fellow and had gone out early, had been the organizer of a business in silk-buying through the provinces. Mr. X— spoke of the struggles they had undergone. How through thick and thin they had stuck by the Empire in India. They had ruled the natives with a rod of iron and had helped put civilization where chaos had been. In fact, the Queen for his service to England had conferred on one of them a medal—which from Mr. X—'s description must have looked like the back of a family album in bronze—and had sent him a letter. Mr. X—'s eyes burnt with pride and satisfaction as he told of these strong men.

Meanwhile on me the light dawned, the explanation of Mr. X— in Italy. He belonged to a great conquering and colonizing race. The

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spirit survived in him. It might be jam and eggs and ventilation, but the spirit, however little he recognized its working in him, was there. He would civilize the tribes of Romagna, Veneto and Umbria, and take up the white man's burden in Tuscan hotels.

IX

SPAIN IN ITALY

The Corrida, as the Italians call it, using the Spanish term, is in the corso where the famous bicycle races are run. More than five thousand people have come to see it, men and women and boys, but mostly men; some of them like clowns with the white dust of the road on their faces, hot from nearby cities and towns and country villas.

Within the stadium they have set up a ring that is less than half the size of the area, two wooden fences one within the other, painted red and yellow. A trumpet blows. And still, though the trumpet is stirring, one doubts how

the Italians, who are not very kind to animals, will take to this fierce sport; though people like it in Spain, where every one loves animals and where there is a proverb that says that the donkey is always the baby in the house, meaning of course that every one pets him. The leader of the Corrida rides into the ring, followed by the bullfighters, with a stray horse or so and two great dappled horses decked out in streamers. The Spaniards themselves, their walk and their costumes for a moment, in spite of everything, the cramped bullring, the lack of horses, the imported quality of the sport, are magnificent. The sindaco throws to the leader the keys of the city tied with ribbons. The trumpet sounds again, the gates are opened and presently a black bull, rather small, comes in. He shakes his horns and looks at these strange enemies. For a moment I am at a loss over the flatness of it all and the cause; then I see that there are no picadors on horseback with lances, no horses are to be killed by the bull, that part of the bullfight is forbidden.

The cloaks begin to flame in front of the bull,

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he dashes at them. The bullfighters elude the lunges of the bull by leaping over the fence. The spectators laugh and roar; plainly they think it a jolly matter playing tag with such a playmate. From time to time the bull tries to go back to his stall; but the gate is closed and he turns again to his foes. At this the spectators laugh. The trumpet sounds again. The barbs with their bright streamers will be plunged now into the bull. A bullfighter in green charges at the bull as the bull charges at him, the barbs are struck into the shoulder, the man leaps over the bull's head. He does this twice, to a great handclapping. The bull is let out. The horn sounds and a brown bull rushes in, snorting and hot, tearing the ground with his hoofs. He is a better fighter. Once he runs on to the man in green and the crowd holds its breath. But the man shoots forward on the earth and the bull plunges over and past him and darts after the next cloak. The man rises, holds up his hand and bows, there are shouts of applause. The game thickens, the barbs enrage this brown bull to a frenzy. But

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he is not to be killed. There is an intermission. I see only one rank dissenter, a fat woman in gray and rose near me is expostulating with her husband. If Italy formed an alliance with Austria, France would disappear in two years, the chauffeur next me mutters, apropos of nothing any one has said.

There is another intermission. The Fascisti band in their black shirts and long-fronted dark hair, play a patriotic air.

Then the trumpet sounds again and a wild black bull, rather undersize, dashes across the ring and straight at the first man he sees. The spectators roar with laughter. But this bull seems to surprise the Spaniards. There is a good deal of help with one distracting cloak after another, flashing colors before those furious eyes, and a great deal of leaping over the fence and sliding through the narrow exits. The crowd likes this bull. The barbs are stuck into him, there are at least ten driven into the flesh of his shoulders, with applause each time from the onlookers. Then the bull surprises every one; he dashes at the fence and plunges

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over it. In the outer ring there is a great scampering. The bull is headed into the ring again, amid happy shouts and laughter and cheers. A moment later he tries it again; every one howls and loves him. Four times he leaps the fence. The Spaniards are kept busy.

Plainly it is time for the espada, who comes in with his sword and his red cloak and bows to the sindaco. He is the celebrated Parejito, who will kill the first bull, according to the posters. The espada and the bull begin their fight. And presently for a second we see a perfect thing, the human body in its last perfection, every nerve and muscle suspended in a supreme skill; the thrust is made, the sword comes clean through the bull's body; there is a burst of applause, more in the spirit of the game, it seems, than in any enthusiasm. The bull sinks to the ground, the great horses are led in and he is dragged away. But the climax drops again. The horses are too big: after all, this was a game little fellow. It was not so dreadful killing him, we meat-eating and hunting races are used to that idea. But nevertheless there was

nothing so very glorious about killing him. The ardent band plays patriotic music and many people go out. There are many empty seats after this intermission.

The next fight is less of a success all round. The bull is not so pugnacious, there is less laughter after that first real blood a moment since, and the renowned Estrella is not so charming or so skillful as Parejito was; he sticks the sword clean through the animal and out at one side without killing him, draws it out again to some applause and with the next thrust breaks it. And after the second sword is driven in the bull takes long to die. Many people are leaving before the horses come in, and many are laughing at the trouble they have getting the bull killed, the joke is on the renowned Estrella and his friends. But, except for those two minutes of dying bulls, the whole occasion has been a game, a joke, a catch-me-if-you-can between man and beast; and nobody sees much else to it, though every one is a little excited when he starts home.

But in Spain this bullfight is all harsh and

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magnificent. It has that mixture of the barbaric with grave elegance that you see everywhere in Spanish things. In it the human is expert and powerful with the same power and perfection that is in the world of nature and wild animals. The trumpet sounds and into the ring come the picadors' prancing horses—old and worthless but masked in trappings—and the double team of mules that will drag out the carcasses; after them the bullfighters in their gorgeous clothes and then the servants of the ring: they cast red shadows on the bright sand.

The bull comes in. He is a special breed from a Duke's ranch in the mountains, he has a narrow rump behind and in front a heavy chest; his head is short and broad. The fight begins, the cloaks, the baiting. The picadors ride up against the bull; they prick him with their long lances. The bull charges at the horse and rider; and sometimes throws them ten feet into the air; sometimes with a blow of his horns he rips the horse's bowels out. The horse's blood reddens the horns of the bull and the entrails of the horse pour down to the sand. Whatever else

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may be said of this appalling brutality, the psychology of it hits the point. Through such a sight the shock of the bull's power gets to us. After it the fight is a terrific matter, there is no merry game of tag, there is nothing to laugh at in this business. The details of the technique that makes the fight possible are known from long habit to every Spanish spectator; he watches the fighters and adores them. That the animal will charge at the cloak instead of at the man is no doubt a stupidity; but the power and fury are there nevertheless, just as the power is in the wind, which bloweth where it listeth, and in the water driving blindly toward the earth's center or fire toward the air. The goads and barbs are not so much mere baiting and torment of a dumb animal as they are an added increase in ferocity and danger.

At length the espada meets the bull, and with the sword held lightly receives in his wrist, within that small shape of perfect muscle and nerve and skill, without moving an inch in his steps, the huge weight of the bull's charge. Afterward the double team of mules with their

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streamers and jingling bells canter in to draw away the carcass. But the mules are only sleek and bright, they have no dignity; and it seems still almost unbelievable that the force has gone out of the thing they drag. It is like killing a planet.

X

DIRETTISSIMO

In the Direttissimo Genova Pisa Roma our compartment was full; it was in fact crowded when the official's three sons squeezed around their father's knees or stood in the door. On one side by the window a man from Salerno and White Plains, tall, ruddy, big teeth and a sloping, dull head, sat; with a great bottle of red wine tucked under his elbow in the corner behind him. Next to him sat the government official, a faded man with features something in the style of Lloyd George, more honest and less effectual looking. He seemed kindly and a little vague, and interested in every one. The third from the window was an older gentle-

man, tall and bulky, from Genoa. He was skeptical-looking with rough blasts of dialect across his speech; and next, an engineer, a man of thirty-five.

On my side of the compartment the other American from White Plains had the seat by the window opposite his friend. He was a short and sodden figure. Next came the official's wife, with no hat, and with a black alpaca dustcoat buttoned clear up to the throat over whatever dress she might have on. She had a kind, neglected face with traces of lovely features still, though worn out with the family and life in general. On her lap leaned and sat and reclined a little girl of six, a pretty child smartly dressed in an Indian silk jacket flounced at the bottom and a tiny, flaring white skirt beneath. The daughter of the Genoese, eighteen or less, squeezed into the place beside the signora, and next to me sat a priest a little past thirty.

The American in the corner, aided by his good wine, had been talking ever since we left Genoa.

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“Yes, you get five, ten, twelve dollars a day”—he was a mason, his friend also—“but what does that come to when there are strikes all the time and you got to spend what you saved up? Eh? Yes, and look what you have to pay for a place to live, for one room! In America you got to remember there’s lots of”—he went on loudly and foolishly talking his blurred statistics, first to the official, to the Genoese, to the signorina, the signora, all of whom listened only by turns and not eagerly.

Did we know why he was coming to Italy now? To see about his young lady. He was an American citizen, had taken out his papers during the war, and oughtn’t his fidanzata be an American citizen if she was his wife? Eh? He had written this to Washington but he didn’t know; they never did anything for him down there, some law—and he was coming over to Salerno himself for her. That would not concern the quota. That was best.

The signorina said alertly that yes, undoubtedly that was best, and the signora, the official’s wife, said that surely the American government

would let a man's wife go around with him.

This tangent stole the conversation somewhat away from the American citizen and his business in White Plains and money, populations and subways and large buildings. When he left off talking he joined his comrade in sleep and was soon snoring. The official could tell you a great deal on the score of the government. He had served in many places—mark the list of them, all over Italy from Verona to Bari. They had had a beautiful house outside of Mantua—the signora said—only to leave it. But what can you do? Undoubtedly Mussolini, the Genoese gentleman said, had lost much during the past year. His power was waning, you could see that from many signs. The official and his signora shut their mouths. But still, the gentleman's daughter argued, we must admit that there was less smoke in these tunnels this year than last; now that was certainly better government.

The government was discussed until the engineer suddenly broke his silence by saying that the trouble in Italy was lack of system.

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Everything needed system. Exactly. Germany was the model for Italy. Look at the language even—*si prega di non sputare!* Good God! We beg that you will not spit on the floor. Look at German—*verboten*—strong, straight! And English—don't spit—smack down like your foot, what a difference!

I argued then that this courtesy in the words was as much a form of civilization as sanitation was. "Why not have both?" said I.

Civilization in both terms? The priest agreed, by Bacchus, *si, per Bacco!*

"But," said the engineer, "look at our language—no words for one thing after another, sleeping-car, side-car, things by hundreds. Side-car, and no word for it in Italian."

"But," the priest said, "life consists of many things besides side-cars."

The Germans were the nation, the engineer said.

"Who could say that?" replied the priest. "Industrially if you like, mechanically, if you like, system if you like, but in other respects?"

"Kant," shouted the engineer. "Where's

any Kant in Italy? Kant, Hegel, Schopenhauer? In philosophy we had Croce, but he is past, out of date."

"Kant, yes," said the priest, "but Kant too is out of date, he is taught in the schools, in the history of philosophy and of method, but he has become merely historical."

"Our Italian student learns nothing in the universities," the engineer said.

"But Kant!" said the priest. "Saint Thomas is more fundamental and more enduring in modern thought."

Every one discussed how much music the Germans might be said to have. "After all," said the engineer, "what do nations know of each other? The Turks are the most honest race in Europe."

This threw a bombshell into the company and every one talked at once, the priest naturally leading. But who here had lived in Turkey? The engineer had for four years. The most honest race!

"Honest then in business," the priest thundered. "But look at their religion."

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"It suits them," retorted the engineer.

"But, but"—the priest raised a warning finger straight up like Leonardo's John the Baptist—"we shall never forget how they murdered our sisters in Asia Minor!"

Nobody could argue that point, and fortunately the engineer was getting off at Sesto Levante. The Genoese moved down and the priest changed to that side.

He begged to drop philosophy, he had done nothing for months but study for an examination, now past, and he was going to Rome. *Parlons d'autres choses*, pardon, what was the Signore's book?

But the title was in English, which alas he did not read. The Genoese read that it was a book of Landor's essays. He began to talk of English literature and English thought. In his opinion English treatises were much clearer than Italian or even French. Philosophic writing at Oxford was clearer, more compact and simpler than Italian writing. He could not pronounce English but he loved English books. What a genius Hardy was, and Dickens!

When he read the stories of Kipling he seemed to know the very people themselves, soldiers or sailors who, though they were so foreign, seemed for him to have the Genoese dialect in their mouths. The man from White Plains woke up, and listened to this matter so strange to him, and grinned; he was pleased that I was included. Not that the Genoese gentleman did not like Goldoni, but, Italian as he was, he thought Molière a thousand times superior. That was a fact. Pirandello, the priest said, was most interesting but he should write less. D'Annunzio every one flouted—the Genoese said “Pooh!” He was going to buy the Lander, and he began to take down the publisher’s address, while his daughter looked on sweetly and gently, as one might look at a child who fancied he was going to buy a star.

And was I in Italy on business? he asked. “No, only traveling,” I said. “To see the cities again.”

Ravenna, Byzantine; Pisa, Orcagna; Perugia, Perugino; Padua, Giotto—the signorina

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began giving in a breath the town and the reason for seeing it.

I said, "Yes, Signorina, but the towns as well, themselves. And why? Because I have need to see these Italian cities as one needs various pieces of music to feed one's spirit."

The touch of oratory in that, of course, carried it far. Every one turned to every one else and smiled, and nodded a bit sideways.

"Ah," the signorina said gracefully, "that shows, then, that one is oneself a poet, does it not?"

The government official looked at his watch. It was past twelve, he said, midnight.

"Past twelve?" The priest started and took two caramels in tissue paper from his pocket. He offered one to the signorina, who smiled and thanked him, unwrapped and ate it gravely while the priest ate his.

"Past twelve," the Genoese turned to the priest, reminding him. The priest knew that. You might think he should not eat, since his fast began at twelve. But no. He would drink, too. Twelve by the clock, yes, but that

was not the real time. He allowed himself until 12.20 before he fasted, that was really the right time, by the logical measure, the sun.

He took out a bottle of cordial and swallowed a little. The Genoese looked at him inquiringly. Naturally he kept the rule of fasting from midnight till he had said mass every day? Obviously, the priest replied, though for that matter religion was here—he touched his breast—not in the letter. The eyes of the Genoese, who had twice quoted Voltaire since Sesto Levante, twinkled.

A moth blew in against the light; and this gentleman spelt out butterfly for me and asked how that was pronounced in English. I told him.

“Ah, then,” cried the signorina, “that is what the opera means, Madame Butterflai, she was a farfalla—vero!”

Four hours had now passed and, with incredible vitality, the conversation had been kept up, broken only by such pauses as might occur in an oration or a monologue. We were nearing Pietrasanta, not so far from Pisa,

where the official's family and I were to descend. The wind from the sea blew in out of the darkness outside, with now and then the perfume of oleanders. The two sons came and stood in the door, one of them a dark, athletic looking youth, the other shorter, with red hair brushed straight up in the Fascisti fashion. That boy, the father said to me, was an artist; he had painted already a picture that went to the exhibition and took a prize, and he was only fifteen.

"But," said the Genoese gentleman, and smiled at the signorina, "how fortunate you are, Signora, to have a daughter!" The signorina smiled back at her father charmingly.

"Ah, yes," the official answered, "that is true. She is not our daughter, however."

"No," the signora added, while the little girl huddled against her knee, "she is a child we have adopted."

"It was only one more you see," the official said, his kind eyes looking almost abashed, "and it takes no more to feed one than it does for the rest of them."

The signora drew back the little girl's head and kissed her. The priest asked if the child's mother was dead.

"No," said the signora, while the child listened with round eyes, "living—living in Verona. We took this little one when she was three. We found her on the streets, her mother had her out begging. The mother was an unfortunate."

"Bad," the official said.

"And what chance was there for the poor little thing? Her mother would only have brought her up to shame. She herself was already finished. A pretty woman but she'd got fat already."

"She was already fat," the fifteen-year old son explained again.

"Imagine!" the child said.

"Do you remember your mother?" the signorina asked.

The little girl opened a locket that she wore on a silver chain and showed us all the picture of her mother, a beautiful, dark face, with a full mouth and great wild eyes.

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"When we took her," the signora went on, "she was like your little finger, and all rags. *E vero?*" She turned to the child, who nodded her head in agreement.

The child looked at the company. "Imagine," she said, "at first I could not even go to bed alone, I was always afraid."

By now the train was drawing into Pisa. We took down our belongings from the racks and said good-by. The official and his wife, the two larger boys, the little boy and the little girl shook hands with every one. The official himself turned last to the two men from White Plains and kissed them; and with that seemed to express exactly what he felt.

XI

YOUNG LADY WITH DUCCIO

IN Duccio's painting, in these panels from the *Majestá* that are in the Siena Opera del Duomo, and especially in the *Death of the Virgin*, the *Betrayal of Christ*, the *Descent*

from the Cross, the quality is at the same time rich, poignant and austere. I know of no painting where the designing, the pattern, is more severe, more strictly chosen, no painting more deeply felt and passionately suffered. The naïve reality of the world here represented is externally primitive; the directness of emotion is primitive, perhaps, or at least pre-Renaissance; the technical resource is grave, minute, rich and sophisticated; the culture is grand and intense.

I stand for the hundredth time before this reduction of subject-matter to pure painting, this expression of profound content in pure art. I marvel at such a combination in painting of abstract purity and moving import. I mark in Duccio's painting the taste, the ample and wide control of intricate technical means, the tragic tone. I am possessed by the power of this terrible, learned, passionate, austere soul. And then all at once I am aware, close at hand for a moment, of a young lady from the hotel. She has paused before these paintings of Duccio's.

The young lady gazes at these pictures for a

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little with a friendly, easy look in her eyes and about her mouth. "Nice," she evidently thinks, in decorators' terms. Will you please look, Duccio—however you pronounce it—is decorative enough; those gold lines in the figures and gold skies beyond—the jolly old thing would be amusing on a wall of rough plaster. Some of the jolly new pieces in the studios at home are like these, those with greenish skins and twisted necks and drawing any way you please if it expresses you, though of course it must be decorative, or what is a picture for? what else is art? and all that of course. The young lady passes on by.

This young lady has a straight, loose figure, easy and slight. Her face ought somehow to be classical. It appears to meet the classic formula, for it is without subtle detail or nuance and rather general in outline. The difference is, however, that while the classical type has an expression of general qualities, this face seems rather to express general things, actions, events. It is the face of a person who has engaged in a great many occasions but brought

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little to them. About the whole presence there is an air of animation without violence, and vividness without point. The young lady is dressed in a French model, pale stuff with a sash of purple and red. She wears some beautiful old jewels that seem, on her and with her frock, oddly placed, like bits of Palestrina on a hotel orchestra.

I have known this young lady a little. She has some charm, the charm of energy and sanitation. She has the breeze of a certain easy-going, frank barbarism. She has the verve of a person who has for the most part had the things she wanted. She has enjoyed the social perquisites of an education without enduring its pangs and ardors. Views she has, beliefs. She believes in freedom and street cleaning, dry cleaning too, and in being happy; in votes for women, or at least in women doing what they please, which is what she thinks men do. She believes in big fine men and in children being sensibly brought up; and that ought to mean that she will be a good mother, though, as a matter of fact, it does not, since she does not

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believe in troubling herself and considers herself an individualist.

One wonders, to repeat, what happens, then, when this young lady and the thousands of her, old and young, come in contact with art, with an art like Duccio's. You wonder what through her is brought to this art that is derived from religious passion, from terror, aspiration, faith, from a vivid contact with the natural world, from toil, craft, and the culture of a long tradition.

Leaving out Duccio, you wonder what all these fellow citizens of ours are doing to the future chances of art among us. They have lost what is one of the great sources of early art, a naïve response to human experience. But they have achieved only a surface sophistication to take its place. They have ceased to think that lightning is a god, but they know electricity only as bulbs and switches. The demons of the air have become the mildly social radio. With the natural world they are less sophisticated than primitive man. In his soul reverberated the lightning and thunder and

brought at least their own kind of knowledge. But these people accept nature as they do an automobile for what can be done with it. They get the crudity of primitive experience without the sting; they enjoy a kind of peptonized barbarism. To have given up a faith in wooden poles and fetiches only to arrive at faith in massage is no great gain for art. And the only gain from no longer taking fire as a spirit is to have a spirit that is fire.

So far as art goes there is one thing that, from the hordes of such as this young person, we can take as hopeful; and that is simplification. Their conceptions of Progress, Idealism, Love, Goodness, Faith, and so on are superficial, without ramifications into the fibres of life, without wings into the mystery of life, without roots into its shadow, and without lasting pain, surprise or ecstasy. But these conceptions are nevertheless naïve and simple. They may in time represent a combination of ignorance, and instinct and energy from which new beginnings may come. In them living may hit bottom and start again. From the simplifica-

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tion, the generality of outline and the naïveté of these people there may in time spring the new myth, and this myth be a source of art.

For the present before Duccio of the Descent from the Cross, with its beauty and labor and tragic soul, this young lady is like an active, slightly hard, well dressed and not unpleasant child.

XII

ANTICA TRATTORIA

At the Antica Trattoria Teresa Fusco it is nine o'clock, ten o'clock, as time goes on. Near by in the tiny bay that runs behind the Castel Ovo, built to guard an Emperor's treasure seven hundred years ago, the water is thick with sailboats and little barges and fishermen's canoes; from which the sailors and old women and boys still are bringing in the oars to store them for the night, passing with their dripping, unwieldy burdens among the tables of the guests as gravely and directly as the sun sets at the end of the day. This is the Antica Trattoria Teresa

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Fusco, but in the adjoining place also, the Antica Trattoria della Bersagliera, they are singing, laughing, eating, walking about. Nearer the water's edge are the little stands for lemonade and beer, humbler, moveable establishments where families, poor people and stragglers may sit for next to nothing and pass an hour. And between these and the line of the two restaurants a stream of people goes past, households with children alongside and babies asleep in their arms, beggars, soldiers, cocottes, sailors and fishermen, Spaniards, Greeks, and now and then Orientals, and Negroes from Africa. The waiters run hither and thither, people shout to them; I hear the small waves lapping on the quay; the folded sails stir in the gusts of breeze. In the shadow of the ancient castle walls, grown now into a mere mass of darkness as the lights go out everywhere within the gate, life streams and glitters, chatters, sings, cries, a rumor and flash of vitality and motion. And at the same time there is in all this a deep and ancient repose. Everything here is so full and so abundantly expressed that it carries with it a

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sense of permanence, there seems to emerge a kind of complete and motionless truth.

At the next table a man with a crêpe band on his sleeve sits at a table with three babies from three to eight, and the four of them are eating minestrone with cheese, frutta di mare and wine. The jasmine man comes by. He has put the small flowers on the end of pine leaves and bound them then into bunches with ivy; on a straw tray he carries gardenias, their perfume spreads on the air. He wears a ragged coat and an old blue cap; his face is like Poe's grown battered and wilder. He takes a big egg from his pocket and shows it to me.

Duck's egg, he says. He paid a lira fifty for it. Ducks' eggs are very rich, Signore. This is for the baby. The mother was weak when the baby was born, but this will make him strong.

Little boys steal by the waiters' legs and pick up the butts of cigarettes, darting here and there around the tables. The servants of the ostricari hurry about with orders of sea-foods. Four or five beggars wait at the rim of the company for the waiters to turn their backs. And

an old woman, fat and calm, comes in and moves from table to table, holding her black apron up to carry the bread that people give her. Her cotton dress is purple with round figures on it in black and red, she has a brown and yellow handkerchief bound on her head. At one of the tables out beyond the awning is a group of men, ten of them, having a supper party.

They call to her—"Marta!"

But the man at the head of the table instead of giving her bread or fruit or cheese as the other tables have done, holds out his palm. Marta tells his fortune and his friends listen and laugh. His affairs are going well, ah, si, abbastanza bene, but he is to beware of evil from that friend of his—she points to the fat man at the foot of the table. Marta tells ten fortunes; she gets money this time, not food. But to Naples it is impossible that fortune telling should be taken so lightly, a mere pastime. Five or six of the men rise one by one and take the old woman aside and listen gravely to the prophecies and revelations that she whispers in

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their ears, and come back gravely to their seats again.

In the midst of this party I become aware, rather suddenly somehow, of one man sitting there with the rest. His clear features, his hair, his eyes, his voice and figure present an extraordinary beauty. There is a discussion roaring, now that the fortunes are told and Marta is gone; a climax appears in the argument; every one throws in a saying to cap the matter. And finally a man calls out in a clown's tone—

“Siamo d' accordo,”

and another swears by the Madonna that it is nothing less, every one is agreed.

But this creature among them who is so beautiful seems distinct and apart from the men around him and when it comes to him the horse-play and the loud, forced humor seems to subside somewhat. The others laugh at what he says but he says it with a certain ease and security. It is plain that he is less of a buffoon, and that some sort of dignity marks him out.

I watch this man as he sits there with his fellows, under this divine southern night so bewildered everywhere with stars. One wonders how he comes to have this easy force and separable poise. Is it the assurance of his own position physically among his fellows and the knowledge of the esteem in which he moves that bestows on him this easy superiority? Or is it that the Greeks were right in what they thought of the external and the unseen in men; does this same harmony of elements that we see about this beautiful body there find also some parallel within?

A cry comes through the restaurant, as loud as if it were the middle of the street.

"Cioé Mimi! Sigarett'! Mimi! Signori, viene Mimi!"

And a blind man, walking with a staff and led by a little girl, makes his way among the tables, tapping as he goes the tin box hanging at his side. He wears a straw hat with a wide brim turned up in front and smiles and moves his eyes eagerly about.

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Mimi goes from group to group and people buy cigarettes, paying double for them as often as not. At one table there is a woman in black, a figure ample and luxurious in the manner of the Mediterranean, a beautiful pure Greek head, round skull, straight nose and perfect white brow. Her eyes are clear and dark, her teeth glitter when she laughs. She has long brilliant earrings and a mass of bracelets. With her there are two men and another girl, small, dressed in white, with the heavily blacked eyes of a *cocotte* and a cluster of flowers in her yellow hair.

"Mimi!" the blind man cries, "Viene Mimi!"

The woman with the Greek head calls Mimi to her side and beckons to the child leading him.

"Listen," she says to her companions, "he'll know my voice. You'll see. I've been away six months—in Viterbo—but Mimi'll know me by my voice. Mimi?"

"Si."

“Chi parla?”

Mimi comes up closer and begins to tremble with the excitement of the venture.

“Speak again, Signorina.” His hands are trembling harder.

“Whose voice is this?”

Mimi pauses a moment.

“Teresina!”

“Do you see,” the woman says, turning delightedly to her companions. “I told you so.” And Mimi laughs happily.

She pats Mimi’s arm and gives him a glass of wine. The men beside her play up to the moment and buy a pile of cigarettes and Mimi moves on. The carnation seller comes by with carnations, red and paler rose. The man on her right buys the whole armful and gives them to her.

They are playing Santa Lucia at the Bersagliera, and Ciro di Meglio is calling his oysters and sea-foods there, the best in the world he says. And under a blazing light Rafaela di Meglio, Ostricarò Trattoria Teresa Fusco stands near me as she presides over a dozen

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bowls of *frutta di mare* bedded in green mosses and sea weed, and sends a sailor about with oysters and shell fish and flat sprawling things.

Through the whole evening and in the midst of all this the music and the songs have gone on. At the other place a woman sings. Here the singers are men; there are more guitars also, and the violinist, who is blind, plays very well. After every four or five pieces the singer goes about among the guests with a plate and the musicians withdraw for a while behind the screen of palms and bamboo to count out the money and divide. Then they return and sing and play again. The music rises, the violin, the strumming guitars, the mandolins, the strange, wild voices. *Carmen*, *Napoli* *Punt é Basta*, *Sole Mio*, *Foxtrot della Nostalgia*, of homesickness, lively and sad at once, and then

Levasi dal mare un dolce canzon.

So far as I can tell nobody listens very particularly to the music. You applaud each number when it is over, and when the singer comes round you throw lire and half lire into

the plate and even two soldi. But you seem to pay no attention at all, you chatter and eat and hum and do whatever pleases you. There is no solemnity, no swooning over art; there is nothing special about music. They are playing now that aria from Verdi.

But then neither do you grow solemn and special at the infinite stars out over the dark rustling bay, nor the lights glinting on the little masts riding at anchor near. Nor do you stop sacredly at every brave dish from Teresa's kitchen or wine from her store, nor at every smile that shines here, every lovely head. Nor do you heed every oleander, rose color and white, in those great jars that screen so carelessly the blaze and sound of the place next door. To-morrow as everybody knows there will be oleanders and sun, the waves in the bay, wine, food and lovely faces, and plenty of music too, of course, if you like it.

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THE DUKE

THE duke is one of the richest men in Italy. The seat of the family is an immense palace on the Riviera, with an oblong garden twice as large again. The wall of this garden joins on to another house almost as large as the palace, and behind this house is another oblong garden with an avenue of old cypresses on two sides and ancient lemon trees in great jars. Through the south end of the house a gallery leads into this from the garden of the palace.

It has been a century and more since the duke's, or any family for that matter, could occupy all the palace, much less the other house; and so, for a good round sum, he broke the traditions of the place ten years ago and rented this house to an English gentleman. The privilege, however, stopped short at this point. The newcomers might look out of the window as much as they chose but their doors

to the garden were locked and sealed; they were not to put a foot in it. But the state of the world since the Great War has reduced the duke's income by several millions, and last New Year's he consented, after long urging, to rent the garden as well as the house. The contract was drawn up and signed; the English tenant agreed to pay a certain amount for the use of this second garden, and to set about improving and restoring it, since it had dropped into more or less of a mere orchard. In addition to this the contract agrees that the Englishman's gardener, or gardeners, shall take over the entire care of the duke's garden and that he shall supply flowers daily for the palace. It is also stipulated that he furnish the palace with flowers for all christenings, birthdays and funerals.

The gardener at first went about his heavy labors with enthusiasm, proud at the thought of serving the duke and of putting flowers in the palace. Later on his warmth abated a little, until at last in May he came to his padrone in indignation. The duke, he said, has asked now if they would not like to furnish

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flowers for the family church during the Virgin's month of May. He used a good many oaths and added finally, with Latin gravity, that with so many millions as the duke surely had, this was exaggerated.

The duke is a man of fifty-four or five. He reads in three languages besides his own, and his magazines and journals come from London and New York, Berlin and Paris. He sleeps in a great gilded bed with carved posts and a canopy of brocade. At the foot of his bed always is a black satin pillow with a skull sitting on it.

AMERICAN DANCERS

They are almost the same size, these two young matrons from America. Their figures are slight like boys; their hair is just recovering from the bobbed older mode and moving cleverly toward the newer. They left their husbands at home in New Jersey and have been on the Continent now a month. First they took from Paris the Oriental Express—four days to Constantinople if you are going straight

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through. But that they did not do. Every night they stopped off at some city that promised to be romantic and amusing. And every night of that whole tour in these towns and afterwards in Turkey they danced. Not a single night missed; with men they met on the trains or in the hotels, every night they danced; it was marvelous.

Here in Florence, where they have settled down for a little, they dance also every night. Their acquaintance among officers and other Italian gentlemen is already remarkable; and the number of letters, proposals, bouquets, that they receive makes the concierge gasp.

Some people set all this down merely to youth; they think these young women gay, wholesome and innocent. Some do not.

RUSSIAN LADIES

The two Russian ladies I have seen daily at our pension in Florence. They are small and slight, with dark bands of hair about their heads and great eyes like the mosaics at Ra-

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venna. They are dimly chic and energetic as they move about the house and the garden paths, delicate and vague, a kind of mystical aristocrats.

Looking at these two ladies one is puzzled. They have edges of poverty about them, but at the same time the things they wear are fine, their clothing and their bracelets and chains and rings. The two of them live in one small room at the end of the corridor; but one sees them at Giacosa's at tea, and meets them in the hall with bottles and with charming trays of pastries and chocolates. I have asked the padrone, who is a kindly and cultivated man, about these Russian ladies.

They came here, he tells me, something like a year after the armistice and took rooms on the garden. Soon after their arrival, however, they consulted him and explained the state of their affairs; they had been utterly ruined by the Bolsheviks and had escaped from Russia through the help of friends. He understood their misfortune and offered them a small room together. He would expect them to pay for

the present only a fifth of the usual rate for pension, the balance could be adjusted later on; at which they wept and kissed his hand and thanked him.

Time went on, a year in fact. Meanwhile the ladies gave the maids no little trouble. For one thing they were always ringing for water. Finally they took to carrying water themselves from the faucets to their apartment. One evening the maid counted twenty-two pitchers carried in. They were always washing, they scrubbed the floors of the room, the threshold, the window sills. Moreover they were always shaking things out of the window. The padrone had seen them from the pavement below; there was no article of clothing from the skin out that had not at one time or another been shaken out that window, which after all looked on the Arno and many passers-by. And they threw things into the street. How many times had he paid fines on their account!

For all these things the padrone had often remonstrated with these ladies, who with tears in their eyes had said they were very sorry.

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Two years passed and gradually the Russians had got rid of most of their possessions. There was some one who managed the sales for them, and gave them absurd prices for the furs and diamonds they had; though the padrone would gladly have taken these at a just price, and said as much to them. Several times lately he has confronted them with the injustice of their spending so much money at Giocosa's and elsewhere, when they are so much in debt to him. And besides what is going to become of them, he asked, when they have spent everything? Ah, yes, they said, alas, what will become of them? How good he has been! they dropped on their knees and kissed his hand and called him indeed their savior. Once in a while also at Giacosa's they gave tea parties to Russian friends.

Finally the padrone has hit on a plan to impress on these ladies the state of affairs. He has drawn up in due legal form a bond in which these ladies agree to pay to him the full sum for the three years' pension owed to him. The exact amount in lire is stated and the date for

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payment is fixed for the first month after the re-establishment of the Imperial régime in Russia and the return of former conditions. This bond the ladies formally signed, and again they have thanked him and kissed his hand.

At the same time the padrone has gone to the Russian consul, a gentleman who was the Czar's consul before the war and has remained somehow under the same title ever since; he has told the consul of these ladies and has said that he thinks he has done his part and more, and that after three years some one else ought to take them over. The consul thanked him as a Russian, and says that we must indeed find some one.

THE TUTOR

When Mrs. X was going abroad for the year she wanted a tutor for her son of twelve, and wrote naturally to her friends at the state university for assistance. They recommended one particular man as the very thing. He had been the light of his high school, where he had

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taken prize after prize in studies, sports and general character. At the university if, as they said, he had not interested himself in books so much as he might, he had arrived after the prescribed four years at his degree of bachelor of arts and had become one of the leading men in college, a captain and president of one thing and another, photographed in the papers, and rich with trophies, cups and ribbons, with councils and with the badges of all our social and athletic tribes. He was an agreeable looking young man as well, fresh and clear. What could be better? A summer and winter in Europe would be also an opportunity for him.

They came to Paris. The first day Mrs. X took an automobile and drove her party about the town, pointing out interesting spots and making suggestions for their tour of sight-seeing. The next day she went about her own affairs and left matters in the tutor's hands. She came home to tea and found him playing checkers with the boy. The two had walked a little on the Rue de Rivoli. That time Mrs. X said nothing. But next day when the same

thing happened she packed the two of them, pupil and master, into a cab and carried them off to the Louvre.

From Rome Mrs. X hoped for better things. The imperial monuments ought to rouse the mind of this bachelor of arts to studies on his own account. While he was in Rome the tutor read one book, Rider Haggard's *She*.

The three of them arrived at last at their destination and settled in the villa close by San Domenico and not far from the gates of Florence. One day Mrs. X sent the tutor with her son for a walk along the hill, having in her mind the happiness for them of the little lanes and garden paths, the farms with their olive trees and shrines, the unexpected pools and tiny streams, and roadside gates and arbors. She learned on their return that they had followed the car track to the town.

And now the other day when he had made an appointment to meet her in front of the Baptistery, she came and found the young man waiting before Ghiberti's famous door, the door that Michelangelo judged right for Paradise.

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He came to Mrs. X holding out his Baedeker. "You know," he said, "there must be something special about this door, so many people have been coming up to look at it."

By this time it was clear to Mrs. X that the young man was in the wrong boat. She wondered how best she could send him home without wounding his feelings and without injustice. But the thing has resolved itself. The tutor has decided that he feels that he ought to go back and, as he says, make good in his own country and so it is arranged. It is the first time in his life that he has not been a success.

LADY WITH A BOTTLE

Every winter and spring these days, as everybody knows, Italy is full of Germans, sometimes single, sometimes whole families with their servants. The hotels from Venice and Rapallo to Naples, Girgenti and Taormina are crowded with them; if you want a room you write well ahead or else might walk the streets. Italians and Americans, whatever they have

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heard of starvation and loss in Germany and whatever truth or falsehood they may have surmised in these reports, find themselves nevertheless confronted with the fact of these many Germans traveling and staying everywhere.

But the heat of June has sent them off again. Even in the best hotels, the Hotel des Palmes, Palace, Russie or Daniele, it is warm for northern visitors, and apartments are easily had again. The couple lunching on the terrace of the little hotel at Monreale have lingered beyond the usual exodus therefore. And they have come up from Palermo in their motor car to see the cloisters and duomo. Meanwhile they have lunched.

The man is tall and heavy, with gray striped flannels and white shoes. His face is round and pink, though you can see that it was once hard, from the thin lips and the crowded eyes. On his fat wrist he wears a bracelet, a gold chain with a little lock. The woman is almost tall and runs to squares and angles. Her dress of Italian linen richly embroidered was meant no doubt for a softer form than hers. On the

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table there are two wine bottles empty and a bottle opened but hardly drunk at all. The waiter has brought the bill, which is a good long one; it runs over on to a second sheet of paper. The woman reads it over and begins to talk at the waiter. She points to the bottle of wine that is still left. It is not *Lacrimæ Christi*, she insists. They will not pay for it.

The waiter, more and more excited, contends that the wine is *Lacrimæ Christi* and that since the bottle has been opened it must be paid for. The matter ends by the lady's putting down a thousand lire note and the waiter goes away to make the change. The lady picks up the bottle, pours the wine out of it on to the tiles beneath the table, and sets it back with the others.

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The lofty interpretation of this English lady's toilette would be perhaps a certain independence that chose the effect best suited to her. This no doubt is a good theory of cos-

tume; but in the case of this lady, seeing the effect she got, such a conclusion would be most unkind.

I see her walking always proudly and alone, about Via Tornabuoni and Via Strozzi and at luncheon and dinner. She sits high on her chair in a white dress made full everywhere and up to her chin and down to her wrists. She has a short waist, a high bust, and a long, old-fashioned corset. Her crimped hair is brushed over rats that make a thick roll all round her head. On the top of this mass of hair, far up, sits a hat with a straight brim and round crown, a frame covered somewhat informally with thin silk. Around the crown is a kind of wreath of black plumes. Under the roll of hair her ears, which are rather large, are left exposed. She wears short earrings, gold balls with turquoises. Her eyes are blue, blue as flowers; the look in them is innocent, pastoral, serene.

Lately another lady has come down from London and joined the first, a delightful and charming person. From this newcomer, who

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turns out to be a stepdaughter, I learn something more of the English lady.

Two years ago, it appears, she had vanished from London and her stepdaughter's house, without taking leave of any one or telling any one of her destination. She was as good as lost. And only three weeks since, so carefully were her tracks covered during the two years at the pension, had they been able to trace her, and that only through a visiting clergyman who has seen her at the service. The stepdaughter had come down on the first train. The lady welcomed her cordially and is going back with her to London.

Her father, the stepdaughter tells me, had married this lady somewhat late in life, quite after, in fact, his children by the first wife were grown. He was a gentleman of great culture but with certain eccentricities perhaps, to which the lady did not always adapt herself. One of her father's peculiarities was that he never liked any part of a fowl but the leg. From the start her stepmother saw to it that he always got the wing.

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THE INDIVIDUALIST

He is a professor of classics from a state university and is in Ravenna to study Roman and Byzantine civilization in the fifth century and sixth. I meet him about the hotel, a slender man, not tall, with tight skin and good, clear eyes. His hands are troubled and nervous.

On this day of St. John's festa we have happened in the cathedral while mass was being said. The professor afterward is in a state of revolt. The two boys serving at the altar had not been so attentive or careful as they might; and he found the look of the priest much too worldly, not to say brutal and wicked. The professor talks and argues and rails with himself about all this. What has this to do with religion? What mockery! This bowing, turning, lifting the hands, this endless complication, which you can see the priest does not feel at all!

I say nothing. There is no use trying to explain to my companion that, though the piety

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of the priest and the boys might no doubt add to the effect of the moment, the whole thing depends on no one individual. It is not a matter arising from the performer's feelings. By means of movements and attitudes, words and vestments, a structure has been formed that is a composition, a work of art, or whatever you like to call it, a free and pure thing, to offer to this occasion and express it. A pure and free thing exactly similar to the related forms of the music or of the cathedral façade.

I say none of this; I know too well that the professor is one of those for whom every aspect of religion is personal, individual, the promptings of the spirit, and still small voices. And these are deep and true things enough in their way and make a discussion long since old. But in this case of the professor of classics the matter is interesting as a comment on why, for all his labors, he will never understand the art of Sophocles, Euripides, or even of Molière. Ever to have expected such men as he to have understood such art seems strange; and it would have

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been stranger still, I suppose, if they had done so.

THE ARTIST'S WIFE

On their way to the frescoes in the choir the painter and his wife have encountered benediction, and so have sat down by the last column to wait till it is over. The service proceeds, the voice of the priest, the responses, the candles and incense; the notes of the organ, reeds and brass, flare out through the church; the last golden light of sunset pours through the west door and upon the columns and choir.

I watch the artist, a delicate, fine face, not over thirty. In appearance he suggests a man who would take little thought of his raiment if there were not some one else that kept him in line. This young man sits there at benediction and does not move. The hands are quiet on his lap; the lines of his mouth, already hardening a little under his New York success, soften; and his eyes are calm and still. He

does not move. He is far away, and does not know that there is a world of men about him or that he has a body. The light of the candles and sunset in the choir is reflected on his gentle face and on his hair.

Beside the artist sits his wife, a smart looking young woman of the same age as he perhaps. She has clear features, the gray eyes rather small but bright. She looks gifted, selfish, shrewd and lazy. She too sits at the benediction quietly; her aspect is relaxed and satisfied. That the service means little to her is evident. The eyes with which she sits watching the actions of the priest and his assistants are cool and matter-of-fact, acquiescent and practical.

What pleases the artist's wife about the benediction is something that concerns him. She glances from time to time at this young man sitting there, so quiet, so filled and perfected in his spirit, so gentle and far-away. He looks like a heavenly child, divine and defenceless; and the maternal in her, which she has found it inconvenient to express by having a

child, gets a satisfaction at the sight. She could take him to her breast and stroke his soft hair; she could fold him in her wings forever. And, moreover, the sight of him there only serves to confirm her instinct and conviction that men are really children, weak creatures of impulse, impractical stragglers, dreamers; who need the plain sense of the right woman to keep them straight; and who have only to be managed well to amount to something. And, finally, this quiet and depth and dream of him, to be seen now so simply exhibited, frightens and thrills her with its mystery. And yet all of him belongs to her, she feels, his body and his mystery; and at this moment she penetrates far into him, where no one else before has ever been. The music, the lights, the words, the place, with their inexpressible, vague yearning and beauty, make more intense this feeling of hers; that much at least the benediction can do for the artist's wife. Her husband sits there, still, far-off, quiet. She likes the benediction because it brings this hour of him, and so satisfies one of the ramifications of her ego.

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SYMBOLS

K— has always kicked at symbols and arrangements. He has objected to marriage for men and women and to meter for poetry, to government, flags, ceremonies, to social conventions and formalities, even to saying merely I am glad to see you or making introductions; he is almost equally hot about any of these. He has often organized and edited and written for magazines that would destroy them.

Now K— has taken a vacation and comes to Italy for a sojourn. But he finds no peace. The Catholic Church has become his chief abomination. He hates the shrines and crucifixes. The candles lighted on the altar he thinks are perils to human intelligence, which also is insulted by the ritual of the mass. What stuff, he says, that turning of the priest about and making signs! The incense, swinging censers and sending up clouds of smoke, he considers insulting, as if we were children, he says.

I try to put in a word for the church, though

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what in the end I am really contending for is the nature and welfare of art, and the power of symbols in expressing our life. I try a few mild points; about the incense, for example. How well, I say, it expresses a certain vague glorification and worship, something that moves upward toward a sweet giving. Giving to what? K— snaps, to make me say God, and so pin me to the wall. I am speaking, I say, of the incense as a symbol of something in us.

K— says, Well?

I ask if there is no sense of release and of expression of himself in that mingling of music, light, color, and lines of movement about the altar. He admits that there is. Then, I say to him, if that be true it is clear that the symbol there is capable of his use one way or another, as well as of the people about us. But all the same K— growls, this is not what it means to them.

At length I argue about the sacrament, which we have just seen in that little, gray, solemn church at Prato, with its columns, its shadows and lights. We have seen the row of people

kneeling there side by side and the ministering priest. Yes, says K—, that sacrament! an astonishing relic of barbarism when savages ate a hero and expected his virtues to pass from his flesh into them! Surviving, by God, in all sun worship, in Christianity, in the cults of Dionysos, Osiris, Tammuz and the rest!

I say to K— that I am not a churchman myself and that I do not take the sacrament; but that nevertheless I know of no symbol so expressive as it is of our sense of the necessary oneness in all life. The sacrament is a perfect symbol and expression of the way in which life feeds on life and draws life from life; of the fact that we live in one another, that, as St. Paul said, we are parts of one another's bodies.

But, K— shouts, this is not what it means to these people!

I have pondered a great deal over K— and this matter. Toward the health of symbols his is no doubt a very useful type of mind. His kind press against symbols and conventions and either explode them or freshen and keep them alive.

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But for his own prosperity, the trouble with K— lies in the fact that he takes symbols for what they mean to other people and not for what they might mean for him, within his own psychology.

In a few weeks K— will be going home to start another magazine. He has not thought of that as a symbol.

COQUETRIES DIVINE

T— believes in doing your job. For the last twenty-two years he has stuck to business. Night and day his thoughts have been where his duty lay, which was at the shoe factory somewhere up the state. The result is that already at forty he is a rich man. In spite of strikes every year or so among his workmen and difficulties with trade union councils, T— is a millionaire, in fact, several times over. But he is also a church member. He grew up with pious parents in the country near St. Louis somewhere, and has never lost his early faith. When he goes to bed at night he says he leaves

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his hand in God's hand, as if in some good uncle's or kinsman's. Every year, whatever his income may be, he gives a tithe of it to God. He always gives ten percent of what he makes, not to charitable organizations and vagrant causes but straight to the Methodist Church, so that, doubtless, there can be no doubt in God's mind as to whom the money is presented. T— says that he thinks it is right for a religious man to give thus of his earnings and that it is a good thing for business; it is right and it pays.

T— so far is unmarried. Despite his wealth and the position that his millions assure him, he has neither fallen enough in love to draw his heart from business nor been captured by a designing lady. But in this respect I foresee a change in T—'s fortunes.

Last year there came to town, from those same regions near St. Louis too, somewhere in Kentucky I believe, to be exact, a young lady of twenty-eight. Her path is oddly if subtly like T—'s. She too has stuck to business since she was eighteen, and before then indeed. And

though marriage is more related to her business than it is to his, and less time has passed, she too has not yet married. Her business is coquetry, exerting an inherited but highly personal sense of fascination over masculine hearts. Her train of suitors beginning in her own gallant Kentucky has been enormous, despite the fact that for some reason she has kicked them all, as they say in her country. The right suitor has not come along. The engagement of men's affections is her great aim in life. Her path long since is rich in hearts.

But this young lady has also the gift of emotion. She is a romantic who grew up in a place where even serenades might rise on starry nights to maidens' window ledges. It is not only her handsome presence and her intention of charming that has conquered many male bosoms; it is also the fact that in the course of a flirtation she is genuinely moved herself. At the time she is all *emotionnée*, trembling, she bows to the dignity of love, she gives a tithe of her heart to the gentle cause.

Now at last this lady has accepted a suitor.

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T— is a catch, nobody can deny that, and it will not be hard to love him at least enough. T— has not yet proposed but he will not be able to resist her; he will soon be at her feet and she will take him. He conquers her, she conquers him. He can mingle affairs with pious faith, she coquetry with feeling. Each has the gift of combining business with real emotion, the combination is invincible.

MASKS

K— is a little girl, not slender but not tall, with light brown, dry hair, a yellowish skin somewhat recklessly rouged, a big social mouth, and big hazel eyes full of natural intelligence, though careless and ranging. I know nothing of where she came from or goes or what she does, only that for several years she has lived in Greenwich Village acting small and very personal parts, especially prostitutes, and reading voluminously, especially the new plays and new novels that the Village bookshops honor with window displays. She calls you Old

Thing, and says darling, darling, anywhere in the conversation—she got that from *The Green Hat*.

It is before K— that I have just expressed a wish that our theater may soon run through its exploitation of the prostitute theme. May the day come soon, I sigh, when we shall have done with the beloved clichés of oaths, sophomoric frankness and, dearest of all, that cry that you have had my body but cannot have my soul—I do not add how much easier it is in most of these cases to find the body than to find the soul, but we will let that pass. And what an adolescent idea it is, I protest, this of the all-wise prostitute! Why should the prostitute know any more of life, I ask, than plenty of other women, than the mother of a child for instance? and I cite other instances—it ought to be a platitude that capacity for experience counts as well as experience, otherwise what of the Hindoo saying that a foolish man goes through life as a spoon through soup without perceiving the savor thereof, otherwise what distinguishes the tragic element of Macbeth

from his hired murderer who cuts your throat and goes home to sleep?

K— might take me up on this and say that the prostitute in a play represents the experience theme as distinguished from the innocence theme, and we could let the matter rest on such dramatic feet. But she jumps for the deeper waters of life—

“That’s simple,” she says. “It’s because the prostitute sees men with their masks off!”

I recognize the brand of thinking, it is familiar enough. But for some reason I leap to the argument. How obvious it is that we mask ourselves at every point of intensity, that men, as Emerson says somewhere, descend to meet. Men mask their fullest selves both high and low. It is ourselves that we try to mask, and mere sex and physical orgy is not the sum of what we are. I should even be disposed to believe that we mask our high goodness more than our low evil. The people, I say to K—, who see us most without our masks are people with imagination, and with the highest form of imagination which is goodness. People like

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St. Francis or Duse, I add taking supreme examples, who can draw the soul of us through our eyes, they most of all see us without our masks.

I can tell that it is time to end my unhumorous little sermon, K— has her earrings screwed tighter and her lips done and is ready to start to rehearsal, and I would gladly let the subject drop, masks and all. But K— looks at me for a moment very much interested. “Yes, I know,” she says, “you’re a sweet old thing. But darling, darling, these people don’t know modern life as it is,” and she is gone. Duse might pass, with the D’Annuzio episode to help, but it was a mistake to bring in St. Francis and Emerson.

DEMOCRACY

The chair that Professor P— holds in the New England college is one full of interest nowadays, but, because of this very modernity, full of perils. He has to pilot it carefully between its becoming on the one hand a mere

chatter of literary lecturing and on the other an annoyance to the capitalists who make his college possible. P— was born in Western Massachusetts, had the benefits of a Christian college education, several years of postgraduate work in some large factory of knowledge or other, and then returned as a member of the faculty in his alma mater. His subject, as it naturally would, leads him to spacious definitions and conceptions of things like the Ideal Society, Government, and, most of all, Democracy. Of Democracy he has the usual choice inheritances to repeat, luminous and broad theories with the Attic light upon them. Down in the bottom of his heart, however, as I always knew, P— has another instinct of democracy. What it is to him, with his very consciously simple origin, his Western Massachusetts kind of Christian education in that college propped by millionaires, appears at last, when he tells me of his visit to Mr. R—.

Mr. R— is a banker of wide renown, and from the interest on his yearly income has donated five hundred dollars for the best essay

on the Ideals for our Political Future, to be competed for by the seniors in P—'s college, of which the banker is now a trustee, and which he went through modestly a generation ago. It was later that he emerged, out of long virtue and mediocrity and quiet worship of profitable gods, into this state of millionairessdom, a wrinkled, overlooked wife and a big, discreet, officious house. Since the competition lies wholly in Professor P—'s department he has thought best to come down for an interview with the donor, the College paying the expenses of his trip out of a fund for such purposes. He dined and spent the evening with Mr. R—, and has been telling me about it.

What the talk was about I am still unable to find out. The most I can gather is that the two sat there before the big log fire, in a room full of costly tapestries and a black marble mantelpiece from an English castle, and talked hours, the millionaire and P—, as man to man. It might have been college days again. And after a while the host took his tie and collar off

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and took off his shoes too and sat there with his feet stretched out to the fire.

This is what sticks in P—'s mind. It has not occurred to him that this is about what the banker really likes. What thrills him is the big house, the great log fire, the costly antiques and the owner of all these, the power in Washington and Wall Street, sitting there informally with him as man to man with his shoes off. It was those stocking feet that excited P—, made his Democracy carouse.

WHAT MAISIE KNOWS

Maisie has grown very fat now with her sixty years, and settles with difficulty into her orchestra seat, where she sits like a landslide from the floor up to the summit of her shining old eyes. But till the time when years and sciatica and good living and the gradual demise of her cronies had brought her to these correct straits, Maisie was a sinner of the deepest dye, jolly in seeming, rough and ready in her man-

ners but wicked to the point where her friends were silent, put to it somewhat for exact descriptions. But intelligent—Maisie's worst enemy could not deny her brains. She had a mind, shrewdness and luck, and through them and her hearty evil and her good family connections, she made herself a career. Her business had been a delicate one to describe in the open; she has made a profession of arranging introductions here and abroad, entrées, court presentations, international marriages, newcomers into New York society, and—gloriously of late years—new districts and building schemes to be promoted among the right people, new restaurants and hotels to be given a smart following. It is a calling of well-nigh inexhaustible resources but Maisie has gone miraculously far toward exhausting them.

This profession and her Babylonian habits have brought Maisie into contact with all the great, prominent, notorious and celebrated of the earth almost, one way or another, and those sharp eyes have noted them—and that yet sharper tongue passed them on. For twenty

years therefore, as was only natural, people have been saying that she should write her autobiography. Maisie ought to write her memoirs, they said, and what a delicious record it would be of personalities and Vanity Fair, what delectable spices of life too, with that past of hers, that brain of hers, that rattling ready wit. There might be those who would blush and put the book down, but that was the price of celebrity and propriety. Editors joined in this opinion, one after another has begged Maisie for a book of memoirs. And at last she has written it and it has been published. It appeared weekly in a popular newspaper, was syndicated far and wide and is now to be had in a book.

You should read it. Of all pellucid diaries, private Elsie books! There is no scandal, no confession, no ginger and allusion, and clearly Maisie is within rights to do as she chooses about that. But she has denied her mind too, her culture, the play of her distinguished wits; she cuts out comment, intensity and edge; she expects nothing of the reader, she is as brainless

as the best. You would think some virgin under her Papa's eye had seen a list of celebrated visitors and famous amiable events, and prattled about them to the good editor.

Maisie's friends think none the less of her for this performance. If she had written this insipid wash and failed to make a go of it, that would have been another matter. But the newspaper, and the book following after, sell well, pay well, succeed. Before that fact they themselves, as good Americans, are confused, bluffed. It seems to them reasonable that Maisie should play the game.

WORM I' THE BUD

R— is a thwarted romanticist, revolutionist, lover and social swell, all rolled into one and all thwarted. All the violent blood in his gentle handsome body rushes to his head and pours out in words. Theory crowds at those red doors of his lips, to quote the Homer whom, in order to defend his scheme of knowledge and education, he professes to despise. As a result

he is a college professor; and what with his donations to causes, blue ribbon chickens and costly domestic establishment and lavish eccentric hospitality, he is usually strapped for funds. Never for words, however—his theories and social salvations, his biological sociological explanations, his principles of art and his lyrical exposition of life, supply a never ending stream of talk for his lectures—which are brilliantly successful—and for his hours at home.

R—'s wife is a Baltimore lady, ten years ago, and even less, a great beauty. Her great black eyes and pale hair and natural elegance, her taste and high sheen of culture and style, are beyond dispute. She is silken and finished, gracious, sure of herself, suave and reticent. There was a time when R— drank down at one gulp all these qualities together. And at that time, doubtless, Mrs. R—, whatever she may think of it all now, was sure of his power as a lover, his future as a scholar, his social eminence, his daring and prophetic intellectual leadership. Now R— professes and believes in mutual freedom among married couples—either man or

woman, he declares, should go his or her own way. He himself is a faithful husband, but these theories at least make up no little of his conversation; he can quote you reams of modern authors, largely German, from his student days, on the subject of free love. And when he discourses on freedom in love, on men and women's right to follow their individual destinies in love, Mrs. R— sits very calm and lovely and only smiles. So far as I know she has no theories on the subject. She listens to R— and looks at the company smiling quietly. It is when she smiles like that, I observe, that R— gets on his second topic, frankness in sexual matters. He begins on his theme of sexual reticence, hypocrisy, biological fact and holds up his favorite illustration in all the biology of sex, worms.

If you want to see an intelligent attitude toward sex, go to the worm, he says, challenging the whole dinner table of us. There you have none of our false modesty and trying to deny the existence of what is a natural and inevitable life force. Bernard Shaw thought he was say-

ing something original with his doctrine of the life forces and the female pursuing the male to fulfill the plan of nature, ah, these literary fellows are like that—he begins to shout almost—but any fool who was honest could have told you as much all the time. Mark the difference however, between the worm and the human being! When the female worm desires the advances of the male—some of the company, those new to the household, look a trifle startled perhaps, R— goes on—when the female desires the advances of the male, what does she do? She does not pretend to flee, she does not affect modest indifference, not at all. She makes direct overtures to him, she attacks him outright and makes her wants known. R— cites further examples of worm families, mating seasons, stinging particulars from experiments in laboratories, wild flights in persuasive analogy among the forms of biological life. If there is anything that bores him, he says, it is the hypocrisy of women, the way they live up to the rôle that men have assigned them in order to increase the allure, just as has hap-

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pened in the matter of dress with women, it is everything for appearance with them, nothing for reality.

He goes on with this romance of the worms and his biological examples and spreading theories. A bullock or a ram would butt his mate down.

PLUPERFECT LOVE

Most of N—'s acquaintances would tell you that most of his conversation should be classed as criticism of people. He is always talking about this person or that. As a matter of fact, however, his conversation is autobiography. I avoid his company whenever I can but now and again we meet, on the street, in the subway, in some lobby. N— works in the theater. As soon as I see him he begins asking what I think of so and so, and then of some other, and so on.

N— is in his early thirties. He can sketch and paint passably well, certainly with a good eye for color. His voice is rich, if not deep, his accent good if self-conscious and slightly

mindful of higher things. He is cared for frequently by women of between forty and fifty, who think his artist's nature suffers and who around the first of the month give him small sums under the name of loans. He acts and designs, but any of them would tell you that he is frequently out of work because of the inferiority and commercialism of the stuff offered to him. It is not to the point perhaps but I have noticed how very many of N—'s admirers wear silver ornaments and ethnological bangles from places like Siam, Bengal, Burma and New Mexico.

"X— is a great fellow I used to think," N— will say to me, "I thought he had magnanimous properties, he seemed big, full of future glories, I mean talent and creative generosity. But I'm disillusioned, I see what he is now, just talk, he's just got the gift of eloquence, at least I thought it was eloquence, now I call it just wind jamming.

"Do you like Y—'s stage designs?" he says. "The first time I saw them I said these are something—*é qualchecosa!* I swore, as the Italians

say. But you go on seeing them and you get used to them, they're borrowed from Appia and the Russians, don't you think? I don't get any kick out of them any longer.

"I'm through with Z—," he says, "last spring we used to meet and talk over our dreams for a new art. I hated the old theater, I hated to show myself in it, every night I hated going on merely to exhibit myself to the public. Now of course I let it go, one has to live, I've got to get money somehow. Z— and I used to talk things over, he felt as I did, *insipides fastidieuses et vaines*, as that skimmy Hugo translation says, you wouldn't know that was Hamlet's 'Weary, stale, flat, and unprofitable,' would you? God, these translations! Z—, I said of him, is a fine fresh spirit, he feels the sheer exhibitionism in the modern theater. But things this year have shown Z— up. He's playing the game like the rest of them, with his three hundred a week."

So N— goes to the bottom of the alphabet, with all these past glammers of his. I am astonished at the succession of these instances that

he will afford in a single conversation. His progress with them measures his own course. His rise and descent with regard to them indicates the biography of his own qualities. In his own soul the record is invariably the same: thwarted hunger for perfection in the subject under discussion, the bitter dust of disappointment. Perhaps reserve and intensity of feeling prevent his talking of people while they move and nourish his soul. And perhaps not.

TEXAS LIGHTS

MARKET PLAZA

By day the plaza is all wagons, mules, automobiles new and old, painted, rattling or crumbling into the dust, sugar-cane stacked like wigwams or hemp fields, and bales of hay. The fine new market fills one end of it; the arcades in yellow stucco shade the purchasers there; the oleander leaves growing in red jars, the ligustrum and bois d'arc are sharp and green against the white, glaring pavement and walls; the market smells mingle with the smell of horses and fodder. The sounds of the town gather and redouble here, the plaza seems listening to San Antonio and feeding it.

But with night the plaza is another world. Time drops away from it. The wagons are gone from the long, crowded square; the shops around the sides, the market doors, are all closed and dark; the traffic in the streets is gone. The height of the place seems to have grown lower under the sky that is fretted with

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such golden fires indeed, those near, bright stars of the southern land. The paved ground shows here and there; the trees, the ligustrum, and the long branches of the bois d'arc stand out moving in the soft night wind. In groups and sometimes singly, and on one side a solid line of them, long tables have appeared, covered with white oilcloth, now and then in colors, but nearly always white. The goblets and tumblers and water bottles gleam by the scant street lamps farther off and in the light of the lanterns that stand on the tables. Beside them are the cook ovens and braziers with their charcoal fires and the busy forms of the vendors moving about. They are selling tortillas and tamales, chili con carne, red frijoles, Mexican dishes, with black, hot coffee and soda water in bottles. The guests scattered among the tables make no noise; they give you no sense of gayety, but sit gravely at the tables, decorous, talking and not talking, smoking, eating, sitting quietly with their hands in their laps.

At the table near me sits a young man in a blue jacket with a black scarf around his waist

and a black slouch hat on the back of his head. His face is broad like an Egyptian's, brown, with an aquiline nose and white teeth. He sits somewhat away from the table, with one elbow against it, a guitar in his hands. A woman and a girl come in and take their places at the table and order coffee and sit drinking it while the man begins to sing. Beneath the black ribosa their figures are hidden, you see only a hint of their dark faces and their hands. The man strikes his guitar and sings; his voice is high, a singing that is very like what one hears in Sicily, in Girgenti, even in Taormina, despite the foreigners, along the roads at night, a strange mode full of its Arabic origins. *Isolito* is the song he sings, the melody flutters and rises and falls, in that strange, high voice.

When the song ends there is no applause, and the singer strums almost inaudibly three or four chords; the señora passes a piece of money down the table to him, and she and her daughter rise and bow and walk away. An old woman in a black dress and black ribosa,

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sitting on the curb a little away, with a glass of water on the ground beside her and one jasmine in it, calls out the name of her flower as the two women pass, in the hope of selling it. The restaurant traffic goes on, never hurried, never very loud, now and again there is a hum of conversation, a laugh, a quicker dialogue. The moon has risen over the town, the sky has retreated a little, the groups at the tables grown darker and closer down. The stone floor and the tables whiten in the moonlight. Presently an old bent man down the street beside the plaza to the south begins to play his guitar, a fandango, passionate but not very loud, strumming, unbroken; the sound of it spreads along the streets and under the trees.

TULIS

At a table near my own in the patio of the Menger sit a girl and old woman; I can see them both as they talk and can hear all they say. The girl is half Spanish, I should think, from that beautiful round skull and black hair

and those fine-cut nostrils, but paler than the mother, who is a full Mexican type. This woman is fat, grave, a good face, the eternal mother on whom life leans as we lean on the earth's bosom. The girl has full, classical lips and moody eyes like a Murillo saint's. Her name is Tulis—I hear her mother call her that—which in Mexico means, or so my companion at least tells me, cane, the tall cane that grows along the streams, the tall cane that one sees in the Market Plaza.

The girl is talking, the old woman listens in silence, her big peaceful eyes looking intently at the young face.

She has been reading a book on Dostoievsky, she says, lent her by a friend. In it the writer points out how the Slavs, like the Celts and Orientals, have always in their books and tales a character who is a wanderer, the man who lives in two worlds. He has insight into the unseen. He is sometimes a messenger going from place to place. He is the figure of life being carried on, seen, unseen, continuous. To the Slavs men are divided into men of the

towns and men of this double world of seen and unseen. That is how they are so different from the Western mind, from Rome with its solidarity.

She speaks seriously, volubly, with the Latin facility in the grip of an idea. The old woman sits listening gently, receiving this burgeoning life in her child as the earth attends the coming of spring and all birth in nature.

It is not all quite easy for her, Tulis goes on. She feels more than she can state. She has spoken to her confessor about it, and he has told her that it is all to be found in St. Augustine's *City of God*. So she has read *The City of God*.

"Yes," the mother interrupts, "and was it there?"

Wonderfully, forever! the girl declares.

Ah, yes, it was sure to be, the mother has not read the book, but she knows it is sure to be there.

Meantime the sun is well past noon and the glare of it falls white on the poplar leaves that rattle and lisp overhead. The shadows in the

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patio are clear in outline as the tree trunk or the leaves, but are intangible, things that can be seen, but not touched. On the platform, beyond the palm leaves, the orchestra strikes up an air, the winding and returning melody is carried by the flute, with the strings underneath. It is a bright music, never merry, and there is something about it that is continuous, as if it had never really left off, but was only heard again now in its due season, like the return of the moon at night or the evening star. The old woman lays her hand gently on the girl's arm and dozes a little.

FOURTH MISSION

The little mission church faces east into the plaza that was once the enclosure of San Francisco de la Espada of two hundred years ago. Here and there the old wall runs, and now and then a low stone house, half ruin. Near the church to the south is the priest's house, square, with a wing running into the plaza. In the open niches high up in the façade of the church

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the three bells hang that the padres cast; and behind them the dying light shines yellow and quivers into blue.

I enter the church and move down the aisle toward the altar, between the lines of the stations of the cross that alternate with the windows along the walls. It is a little church where a handful of people, all Mexicans perhaps, gather for mass at the right hours. But it stands open now and in the twilight it is gentle and still. On the walls near the altar a red cotton cloth with a gold band is hung for this Christmas season; there are paper flowers in the altar vases, and laurel leaves. In the left corner is St. Joseph's statue and in the right the Virgin with a long blue veil. On the right, by the chancel rail, is a little Nativity, the rocks figured in brown paper, the greens cedar; and there are pigs and sheep and birds, Mary, Joseph and the divine child, all in clay painted and touched with gilt. In front of them is a tiny lamp. Most country chapels so small as this would be barren or trivial or mean and ugly; but this place, opening off the empty,

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half-wild little plaza with its white roads and beaten, bare earth, is grave and noble and clean, despite its poverty and size.

On the plaza now the light has dropped to blue dusk, through which the open ground lies pale and shining. Not far from the church door an old man with a tiny barrow of candies in paper twists has stopped and begun to play an accordion, and two boys, Mexican, of eighteen or more, very slim and dark, are dancing together.

COWBOY AT THE ANTIQUE SHOP WINDOW

He is medium height not tall; what strikes you about his shoulders is their line outward and down, the flatness of the back and the even chest between them, rather than any mediocrity of size; he is, in sum, no big fine fellow. The pattern of his body is sensitive and slight, supple and strong. The waist is small, the hips narrow, the small of the back tense and alive; only the legs are a little bowed from weeks and months on a horse. His movement when he

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walks is swaying like a woman's, lithe like a dancer's. His mouth is sensitive and droll; his eyes look at once mild, lazy and critical, as if they had been long used to the beauty and finish of horses and to simple physical things done perfectly.

I see the cowboy standing there before the window of the antique shop that opens off the hotel where the good tourists go. He wears no coat, the brown flannel sleeves of his shirt show against his darker waistcoat, which does not meet the trousers behind but leaves a fulness of the shirt puffing out. The trousers are tight in the waist, the hips, the legs. His hat is a wide Stetson; on each side of it in front the brim is twisted as if he had been constantly doffing it. Around his neck he wears no cravat, but a great handkerchief rather, red, dotted with green designs. On his feet he wears boots that are cut up high in front of the knee and lower behind. These boots are clay yellow with much red stitching across the foot, and around the top there are five-petaled roses in white and red leather stitched on. The heels of these boots

are high and little, and are placed far under, directly beneath the arch of the foot; the fit of the boots is close and tight, full of the wearer's pride in his small feet; what this tradition is we know, it is Spanish, from the time of the conquistadores.

The taste behind the arrangement of the window is exotic, clever and charming; the objects are choice, but they are not for poor people. At the back stands a portrait of Louis Quinze, looking very powdered, ample and vacuous, beside curtains of wine-red velvet and a velvet table with his crown and scepter cushioned upon it. There is a tray of tiny Mexican figures, not so high as chessmen, in red coral and onyx; a sixteenth century choir book whose black and red notes could be read from across the street; two chasubles in green and black, both heavy with gold, both Spanish. On the floor near the chasubles is a Chinese box in red lacquer with gilt warriors stalking over it; a cigarette case of yellow tortoise unmottled and fragile; two small altar amphoræ in silvered wood; and two spurs from Guadalupe, brass with silver flowers

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inlaid, the straps are carved leather; the rowels of the spurs are starwheels whose points in a horse's flank will send him off like a rocket. There is a great Russian jewel as large as your hand, a love knot and eagle encrusted with rose diamonds. Near the window sits a cock in white jade no higher than a swallow; and beside him, and twice his height, running along the window glass, is a line of crystal images from the late Renaissance by way of Spain and Mexico. One of the images has eyes of turquoise in a black agate head and gracious curved hands of agate. It is full of age and excellence, each one of these images, harmonious forms flowing together in a translucent whole. In a far corner is a pedestal and its Madonna of chestnut wood with blue rubbed on in bands and traces of gilding.

The cowboy stands there without hurry, rolling a cigarette and looking in at the display of objects behind the sheet of glass. He takes his time as his habit is, in those long hours on horseback, on the porch of the ranch house in the evening, by the campfire. He is at home in

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silence and in himself. His nervous hands twitch the cigarette, otherwise he is still. His steady eyes rest on the crystal images, in which the light gathers, making their shapes bright and quiet like water and their perfection fresh and strange.

THE PROFESSOR

The light streaming in under the window blinds awakes me like music coming into the room.

In northern countries when the light is shut down to a narrow opening, the room grows dull and gray, the shadows are flat, the colors fade out. Here in this Texas light the least ray of it can reveal what color is there. Color is lowered to a deeper glow, that is all; the life of things is quieter, perhaps richer, but it does not die away from them.

In the honeysuckle outside, a mocking-bird is singing. He is like vitality itself. The bird is like light. He sings now like a flute, then like a piper, reedy and quivering, then like a coarse barnyard fowl, squawking and croak-

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ing impishly, then a long, soft call and then trills and cadenzas and wild, shrill passages, then like the reeds again and little piping notes. High up in the bright blue beyond the window I see hawks circling. They have the sweep of the sky to themselves, and move about, sailing in great circles, back and forth again and again, making a kind of divine geometry of the air.

The song of the mocking-bird near at hand stops. I see that the Professor who lives next door has come out. He stands with a gray enameled pan in his hand looking at his Orpingtons, fat stupid chickens with fluffy, clumsy legs spraddling out backwards. He has a soft, chubby face, beginning now to fall and to run down in folds at the sides of his chin. His nose points down and his eye-glasses likewise, parallel with the flesh folds. His hair curls about his plump head, his mouth is pursed up into what looks like a meditative whistle. A long black ribbon cut into an inverted V at the end and ornamented with a gold buckle hangs from the watch-pocket of his trousers. His stomach hangs plumply out, not fat but soft and loose

like his face. He looks pleased with himself. Plainly he is one of those self-made men in academic life who take very seriously their rise in the world.

The chicken-yard is enclosed in wire and graveled and has a little house of corrugated iron at one corner. The Professor stands looking through the chicken-wire at his fowls for a while, neither pleased nor bored, amiably and idly interested. Then he begins to throw corn in to the chickens, who dash clumsily after it. When the pan of corn is emptied he sets it down, throws open the gate of the chicken-yard and walks in with a pan of some brown lumpy mixture like bran, which he throws in with the corn. This causes a new stir among the Orpingtons. Then the Professor retreats, takes up a china bowl, and with an expression of knowing science begins to throw the contents into a little tin trough where the chickens drink water. It is doubtless something unfailing in its power to make them lay. Then he shuts the gate and begins to tinker with the netting and to potter around the yard.

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You can look at him and see that he has no interest in the world, no passionate devotions or dark fits of despair or elevation; he is not studious, not active, not meditative, not keen. He is like the Orpington hens, plump, clumsy, domesticated and stately apt. He makes a living—a sort of living—at the university. But he probably potters around in his brain very much as he does in this mild stewardship of his backyard. If only the chicken-yard were painted, the chicken-house white, with a little pastoral touch, something of the Georgics say, in the bright morning! If only the Professor delighted in the social foibles of chickens, in their caprices, their greeds, anything. But not this plump, curly-haired male hen with his chicken food and his flat steps here and there over the grass patches! Not that for life!

THE RIVER ROAD

It is after twilight and the early moon is low already in the west, as I go along the River Road. And coming toward me on his way

from town I see Mr. Wallace, who lives on his farm near the Pedernales. I bought cedar-wood once from him for my winter fire, and gave him a book of Scottish ballads after we had talked on the doorstep half an hour. He is walking along now beside his wagon, the reins fastened to the shaft. I am glad to see him.

I ask him to stop and smoke a cigarette with me, and we sit down by the road. It's rather uphill for his team, isn't it? I say by way of conversation.

"Pretty smart pull I guess," he says, drawing down the corners of his mouth into a sort of smile. He has a thin body, fairly tall, and a droll brown face like a wry little woodgod. When he draws at his cigarette his right eyebrow goes up into a kind of pucker.

Well, Sir, I say, what's happened?

"Nothing much, sep I got a guest now, feller visitin' me," Mr. Wallace replies.

And who is he? I ask.

"Dunno," he says, "Rooshon or sompn. I don't ask questions of course. But he can shore

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play the fiddle. You ought to hear him play. The phonygraf can't tech him."

Where did you find him? I ask.

"In the road," he says.

I think for the thousandth time what a place Texas is. I observe to Mr. Wallace that I have heard that Mrs. Patrick Campbell's father lives in Texas.

"Who's that?" he says. "Any kin to the Govner?"

I tell him that Mrs. Campbell is a great English actress.

"Oh, well, any actress' father might live in Texas, I reckon," he says. And he spits on the ground as he makes his joke. The reins have fallen to the ground. One of the horses has his feet tangled in them. Mr. Wallace rises, puts things to rights, and sits down again to finish his cigarette.

"Queer the difference in beasts," he says. "That there roan just loves the goats, but the sorrel tries to break his neck whenever he sees one. Done everything to break him. Can't do it. I chained up a goat in the stall with

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him onst but 'twan't no good. Bad as ever. Acted like he seed a ghost."

And so he still has the goat ranch?

"Yeah, I reckon I'll always have it," he says. "I reckon I like it right smart, that little ranch. Course it ain't much, just fifteen hundred acres or so. I like to set by the steps when it gits cool in the evenin' and it's gittin' dark and stars come out and I hear the goats comin' in. I read some poetry about it onst and I wisht I could find some more poetry like that. Got an old flute and sometimes I blow that when I'm settin' there. Kind o' company. The goats all come round, think there's sompn to eat I guess. Some folks tries to git me to move in town, but I reckon I'll stay on the ranch."

What does his wife think of it? I venture to inquire; I should think she might be lonely out there.

"No," he says, "my wife she stays in town with my daughter. She's all right; she makes doll clothes; and my daughter makes her livin' bakin' fancy cakes for parties. So we git along all right I reckon."

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Sure, I say warmly, sure you do!

I look at him as we sit there smoking. He has a sort of refinement, he is clean like a fine horse, fresh-hearted as a boy. His intelligence is active and simple and sharp. His passions are strong and genuine, and they are kept to an open and wholesome proportion and temperance by his relation to the world about him. His relation to men, the soil and the natural earth is evenly distributed on account of the way he lives.

"I've got a lot of little kids out there," he goes on, poking at the ground between his feet and not looking up. "Most of 'em are white but there's one little black one. He's the smartest in the lot."

Mr. Wallace rises and starts on his way. I say after him as he goes that I'd like to come and see him some day. How was the road? Could we come in a car?

He makes a wry face as he turns back a moment:

"I'd shore like to have you come. I hope you will. But I dunno about the car. They's a

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road all the way all right but it's so rough you couldn' git there in a airplane without a accident."

I look back now and then as I walk, and see Mr. Wallace swinging along beside his horses and growing fainter and fainter in the dusk; and I think of him. He is so one with the world around him, so much a part of nature here, that he has a sort of pathos, something shy and brave and simple, something pathetic and incommunicable, like an animal. And then I can see him no longer, and return to the moment. The moon has set. A few soft clouds have blown in, but the skies are gentle and clear. The train is crossing the long railroad bridge; and in the starlight I can see the river below with the willows clouding the banks, and in the west the dim hills lie in a long, sighing line.

MARRIED COUPLE

They are the average couple of married people anywhere in our country perhaps, but they have a Western tinge, Southwestern, a strong

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flavor of Texas. Their seat is across the aisle from me and facing in my direction. They are both young, and from the sight of them together and their luggage I should say they have been married two or three years.

I observe that I look at the man first, but that this is only for a second and that then I look at the woman who shares his existence. Her hair is bobbed, left full over the ears and brushed back from the forehead, waving and dark brown. Her profile is clear, but yielding, not distinguished, but not irregular; a soft chin, rather short and rounded; a round, tipped-up, rather childish nose; a brow that seems very fair and white and that is rounded also and low.

Her eyebrows have been plucked to a clean little bow, and they are retouched with black a trifle; there is some of the same penciling around the fair, gray, roundish eyes. She is painted maidenishly, a fresh, soft flower tint over the perfect fairness of a white powder that her skin takes as satin would. It is this soft skin, rose and white, this open-eyedness and

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curls, that make her appear smaller than she is; she is taller than she seems; and her private self—at night when the cold cream has wiped the spring bloom off and the negligée is on—is a big fine girl. An artist fifty feet away from her would say that she had beauty; the average man would call her a beautiful young woman; and most Texas men a pretty girl all right. It is a vacant face full of strut.

For this lady likes herself well enough and is full of confidence. She feels pretty, pursued and successful. I have watched her already, when the train stopped at New Braunsfels, walking up and down the station platform like a proud, sure young hen. She has not a thought in her head, you can see that, and never heard of an idea; she rests on universal principles. And yet she is not coarse any more than she is subtle. She brings to my mind as I look at her the Panope of the Greeks, the nymph of the open view, of the horizon. Sleek, Milton calls her, sleek Panope with all her sisters played; but this Panope does not care very much for playing with her sisters. Her mental opera-

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tions are clear and convincing. What she knows is what she wants, and she has it; so that her knowledge is quite complete in a way.

The husband beside her has a provincial, manly look. His skin is a little dry and sunburnt; his thick straight hair is left full to the very edge where it stops at the base of his skull, and here it is shaved abruptly away, sliced through in fact, with the effect of a wig. His face is no more subtle than his wife's, but it is honest and good-natured and not dissatisfied with himself. His brown eyes are innocent, and sensible and kind and young, and will be young till they close forever, not because he is so very imaginative or poetic, but because they will never be darkened or dried up either by prolonged reflection or by sordid and scheming designs and interests. He is not so much an open book as he is no book at all, he is rather an open vista of human qualities. He is solid, enthusiastic, boyishly profane, simple and not stupid. You can see that he has a good deal of delicate feeling and gentleness. He would give himself to your troubles as a loving and

understanding child might do. A woman from a distance, somewhere far from Texas, might take him romantically, partly because he is straight and handsome in figure and flattering in his regard, and partly also because what complexities he has are the complexities of the natural world, the psychology of the wild if you like, with all the romantic and mysterious possibilities implied. He looks independent not by theory, but by impulse, the most attractive kind of independence. His speech is drawling and slow, with every now and then a Middle Western final r. He calls his wife Doll, and she says Tom.

I sit thinking what the future of this couple will be.

He will go on admiring her and being proud of her and thinking his wife is a pretty lady. And this will give her confidence or rather keep her proud and a fine woman. He will fatten somewhat and get a little declamatory as his manliness retreats from his loins to his brain, from his physical powers to his opinion of himself. They will have a big house, draughty,

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modern and hospitable, without much furniture in it except beds and chairs and some casual prints under glass that have been put once on the walls and left there for good. They will have children who will drive the family automobile by the time they are ten years old and go to dances ten days after appendicitis operations. And there will be pleasant hours together on the porch and driving about and friendly human interests to share and talk over, with a little oil adventures, politics and gossip thrown in. He will not grow tired of her because she has what he wants in a woman, a certain effect of prettiness and affection; because she keeps him conscious of how splendid she is and how generally admired; and because she wastes his money. She will always be satisfied with his pride in her and with her feeling that he is a child on her bosom when all is said and done. If he ever grows absorbed in anything, after the familiar style of American husbands, it will be not business and organization, but horses, motors and hunting, and this will keep him more or less fresh in heart. If he

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affects anything—and she as a woman knows how affected men can be—it will be nothing feminine or precious, but a bit of the cowboy picturesque, the manly adornments of the prairie; and this is a brand of effects for men that even the movies approve of. And it will be satisfying to her inmost soul to have a man who is not small and picayunish like a woman and not always around the house.

THE MIRACLE CHAPEL

Nearly two hundred years ago the monks brought over from Spain two images in wood for the new cathedral of San Fernando. You can see them now, no longer there but at the Miracle Chapel; they are of painted wood, grim and primitive, with their dark eyes and the haunted shadows around, their harsh hands, their bodies so grotesque, bitter and ecstatic.

The statues had not been long in place before it was found that they had miraculous powers; their benefits became famous, and people came from miles around in every direction,

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with afflictions, faith and prayers. The income brought to religion was considerable. In time there was a fire in San Fernando, however, and the images were by a mere hair's breadth rescued from the flames and preserved. They were taken to a little private chapel not far away and set up there; and soon the word spread that they had been saved, or doubtless had saved themselves, and where they were; and people began coming again to visit them, flocking from far and wide to the little chapel with offerings and supplications. The miracles kept up. To own the chapel meant something. The grateful heart so newly restored to health and hope made its contribution. The income began again. There appeared, too, countless testimonies of good received. The walls of this tiny place, scarcely ten feet square, are covered now with votive tablets, little pictures in gilt frames, locks of hair, silver hearts, rosaries, letters, cards, quaint, sweet reminders of what these blessed personages above the altar have done for you. Naturally therefore the chapel owners, when the cathedral was re-

stored, were not anxious to return them. And there is a law in Texas that anything that has been in your possession more than two years is, if you did not steal it, legally yours. Well, then, señorito, what would you have?

But what can the good fathers at San Fernando do? They cannot say that the statues have not the power of miracles. That might be sacrilege; not to add also that then, even if San Fernando had them back, their merit would be gone. One thing the fathers could do, and have done perhaps, and that is to keep one or two members of the family in each generation most devout, knowing well that, if that be seen to, there will be a will in time, sooner or later as God wills, or a deathbed bequest, that will send the wonder-working statues home again to their old, right place in San Fernando. And meantime oil, that modern worker of miracles in Texas, begins to promise well. There are those who think that the advantages of the chapel spot for a gasoline filling station are very great.

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THE BLESSING OF THE ANIMALS

For this seventeenth of January, along toward four in the afternoon, there is a commotion at the little church of San Felipe de Jesus. From all over San Antonio, from out by Zazamora Street and the district of the Corpus Christi road, people have brought their favorite animals, parrots, dogs, cats, hens, birds, in their arms, in cages and baskets or on leash, to be blessed. This is the ceremony of the blessing of the animals, the feast of San Antonio de Abad.

On the steps of the church stand three little boys with puppies and a solemn flutter of little girls with puppies and birds and cats. There are men and women, mostly poor people, with parrots and dogs and chickens. The men have off their hats, the women wear bright skirts and have black ribosos over their heads. One woman with a dark blunt face under her riboso has three animals to be blessed; from her right hand hangs a large rush cage with a green parrot in it; on her left arm rests a small cage

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of canaries, and from it swings a long barrel-like cage of Spanish doves, who huddle together in the midst of such a concourse of men and beasts and before the shine, no doubt, of those white forms that emerge from the church and down the steps to the people under the trees—the Spanish father with his book and the acolytes with the cross and swinging censer.

In the road just outside there is a doubting Thomas in the form of a lady who sits in her motorcar, her dog on her lap. She has chanced by at the moment very likely and has stopped; the regard that she bends on the crowd is cool; you can see that she finds these Mexicans a poor lot. She and her dog enjoy the advantages of a superior civilization; these animals about to be blessed eat anything they can get hold of; she has dog-biscuit. The priest lifts his hand, the service begins. From the silver censer the smoke rises past the bare boughs toward the clear bright sky.

San Antonio de Abad, in whose memory this day opens its loving heart to the dumb creatures here, was an African saint of the fourth or fifth

century. I am somewhat unfamiliar with this San Antonio, but my neighbor in the crowd a little old señor, brown and dried up and kind, tells me something of him. In Egypt he lived, and for many years only in desert places, where he consorted with all animals, gentle and ferocious, taming lions and wild bears and living in brotherhood with all that has wings. Through the long stretch of sixty years he was fed by a raven who brought him every day half a loaf of bread; we know it because this raven on one occasion when St. Paul the Hermit paid Saint Anthony a visit, brought them a whole loaf. If Saint Anthony of Padua preached to the fishes after Saint Francis of Assisi had preached to the birds; Saint Jerome drew the thorn from the lion's foot; Saint Isidore tamed wild beasts; San Antonio de Abad was a greater lover still of wild creatures. His constant companion was a pig, even when he was—quite as you can see him sometimes in the pictures—carrying fire in his hands, which showed that he could cure the Sacred Fire, meaning erysipelas, you see. Sometimes when the devil

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wished to tempt San Antonio he appeared in the form of an animal, but the sign of the cross soon settled that.

The señor gives his terrier a smack for wanting to bark at the smoking incense. Little old women are scattered here and there hugging their cages of pets to them like bright bits of life. The señor points out one of them with a golden brown hen in one hand, she holds by the other a nanny goat's halter. Getting blessed can do the goat no harm, and if you left her at home the neighbors would steal in and milk her. The priest is raising his hand again and the gentle blessing descends on all creatures there.

COUNTERPOINT

She sits in the seat facing mine, a little woman of forty-five or -six with a face oddly full of self-confidence, innocence and a willingness to please. Her husband, she tells me, is expecting her at home, he took her on a business trip to New York with him and left her

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there for a week longer to enjoy the music and grand opera. Every year this time he takes her with him and leaves her in New York to enjoy grand opera. Ah me, she had a voice too. The train bumping like this always makes her want to sing. When she was a little girl she used to sing and sing, her mother had heard Patti once in Cincinnati and used to tell about her, so she would put on a long lace curtain veil and sing like a prima donna. Later she led the choir at church, the soprano, and everybody said you ought to go into grand opera. Then she studied, then she went off to New York, expecting to be a grand opera star some day. The teacher in New York pronounced that she would have a fine voice, if she went on studying, she said. And why had she not gone on, I asked.

“Well, Papa said I don’t see why you should go on living up there in that hall bedroom no bigger than your hat box when you got a lovely big house to live in down here in Texas. So I came home. It nearly broke my heart. Of course you have to work like everything to be

a grand opera singer, learning two or three languages and I suppose going to Europe and studying and all. But I wouldn't have minded that, it's a joy to work hard in something you love. But then of course Arthur wasn't willing to wait, we'd been engaged so long already, so he said he wished I'd come on and marry him now, so I did. But I hated to give up my career. Not that Arthur stopped me, he just said well we'll let the old lady manage. Still I often think I'd have been at a great disadvantage; I suppose I'd never have made a success in opera, I haven't got the physique. I'm strong as a little tiger, Arthur says, but you know you have to be large, at least larger than I am."

"Oh, I don't know," I said, consolingly, "you are not so small for opera. Patti was smaller than you are."

"Oh," she said, and sighed so sadly, "but Patti had less competition in grand opera those days."

I tried again, the sigh had touched me.

"But you are quite as large as Galli Curci, I'm sure," I said.

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"Ah, yes," she said, "but Galli Curci has big eyes. I never had big eyes."

THE LADY

It is still early and most of the houses are closed. A boy on a motorcycle is riding along from one side of the road to the other as he throws newspapers on to the lawns. On the corner of one of the houses clammers a vine covered with little puffs of white flowers that have a strong sweet smell in the morning air like mimosa. Crêpe-myrtle bushes, shell pink, stand here and there with their delicate, myrrh-like fragrance. Pigeons walk up and down along the edge of the roof cooing.

It is one of those Texas days that begin by being gray. Gray fleeces of cloud hang across the dome of the sky and darker masses lie in drifts around the horizon. Among them pale blue patches appear and disappear. The lines of the hills in the west are green-gray, and the valley lies quiet between, filled with shadows and little spaces of yellow-green and a mist of

leaves where the mesquite trees are and the young cedars.

In the stillness I can hear people walking about in some of the houses. Now and then cocks crow from far-off yards and dogs bark. And from the little cabins along the creek the sound of the work-day beginning increases; you can hear doors opening and voices and rattling of chains, and then the sound of an ax on wood and a Negro man singing. More blue comes out. The wheat patches look golden instead of green. The adobe hut of a Mexican slips into the sunlight and stands white as alabaster against the green country. White rocks appear along the ledge above the cliff.

I hear a beautiful voice behind me asking a question—the resonance and sweetness of it creeps through the veins:

“Will you be so kind as to direct me to the San Antonio road?”

I turn and see a light wagon, on the point of falling to pieces, with two thin horses, unshorn and caked with mud, standing in the road. On the front of the wagon-bed sits a woman, and

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with her a boy of ten or twelve. She is past fifty, and is more draggled and worn, if possible, than the horses. She and the boy hang their feet almost to the ground. She wears an old felt hat and a dingy coat that was made for a man, and broken shoes with no stockings, and her face is wrinkled and her dark hair faded.

"I'm afraid we've lost the way," she says, as I lift my hat. She speaks English with a perfect accent and smiles as one might in a drawing-room, tilting her head slightly to one side as she speaks. Her great gray eyes look at me graciously and quietly.

I tell her the way to the San Antonio road, pointing off to the southwest, and she thanks me very much indeed, I am very kind; and touching her horses with her broken whip, she starts on.

One would like to talk with this woman. To ask her who on earth she is, with that manner and that voice and accent and smile like Ellen Terry's. What can she be doing here in a Texas road with that old battered wagon, and barelegged like that and in such rags? And

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is there any end to the ways life will go in Texas? But she has no apology to make and no explanation, and one cannot intrude; and can only lift one's hat again and turn away.

DEFINITIES

The light everywhere is ineffable, blue, clear like glass, perfect. There is no illusion here, no vain hope, but only the fatality of beauty and event, only action and desire and abundance within limitation. The far-off lines of the hills are clear as patterns, their outlines cut sharply against the sky; there are no mists on them, they end forever where the long lines of them are drawn. The days are blue, and the light on the ground is as clear as the sky itself. And near at hand every form attains its shape in the complete light, and establishes without confusion the character of its mass. The light defines the many leaves on the trees and plants. The shadows of the leaves on the wall seem to hang in the air and not to rest where they lie; and they are suspended there blue like spots of

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moonlight. The Spanish Bayonet grows high; the light falls on the leaves with their brilliant edges like steel. The fine, clear leaves of the oleander are gray-silver; they are beautiful as laurel wreaths in poetry; they stand intertwined with their shadows in the delicate shade that glows among them.

And strangely enough it happens in this land flooded with sun and color and the shining happiness of it, the one voice of nature everywhere is the dove. At every hour of the day can be heard the dove's long, sweet, melancholy call. In all this clearness and finality of beauty and changing life, the dove's long note persists, calling again and again, always, from the ground somewhere, in this world of light. From the fields and from the wood, from the low pastures near the river, and from the places where old houses stood once but are burnt down, only the chimneys and crêpe-myrtles standing now, the dove's voice comes. It has the sweet despair of all poetry; it is elegiac; you seem to hear very gently the mournful, eternal grace

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of it; the sad heart of bright days that pass,
that pass away.

LA GOLONDRINA

On the wind blowing from the south there comes the hum of a guitar. The wind moves steadily through the branches of the liveoak outside my window, and against the wind the notes of the strings strike like stars against the line of the night. A light begins to glimmer on the stones of the white road and on the yellow wall opposite. Then three Mexicans come along, one of them carrying a lantern which shines against his wine-colored trousers and casts long, fantastic shadows across the road and on the wall. A girl with a red shawl over her head and shoulders follows them. Her white skirt covered with deep ruffles hangs below the shawl. On the far side, the man nearest the wall carries the guitar, and now he begins to sing, and the girl with him, a heavy, wild, high song, in their metallic voices, passionate and animal, plaintive, old as the night itself.

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A donde vas veloz y fatigada,
La Golondrina que de á qui se va.

They pass and their music fades with the lantern light on the road and the wall, and leaves only the steady, quiet wind in the liveoak.

And the next night I am at dinner in the patio of the Hotel Menger. Above the wall of the court glows the deep blue of the sky. A poplar rises overhead, vines hang on the white walls around, and clumps of oleanders rise here and there with their beautiful clear-edged leaves and pale-rose blossoms. In the fountain a little stream of water splashes. Three Mexicans with a flute and violin and guitar are playing *La Golondrina*, and over the sad, half-wild music and the voices of the guests, you can hear the wind in the poplar.

Then the flute alone plays, winding its reedy, boyish voice through the old song. Underneath it after a while the guitar begins to stir, low, softer than summer. Then the musicians drop all to a minor key and are silent; and presently the flute begins again, alone, *La Golondrina*. The wind rattles the poplar leaves overhead.

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The little voice of the flute stands apart from the scene, as if it were the theme of life; it is like a shepherd boy coming up along a hillside in the starlight, delicate, slender, solitary.

THE END

